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Livelihoods, Lifestyle Choices and the Construction of Young Women's Realities in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha

By

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Phumzani imihlana maqhawekazi, kudala nindibelekile! Phumzani amagxalaba, kudala ndixhathisile. Phumzani iingalo, kudala nindigodlile. Phumzani izandla, kudala ndibambelele. Ndisimelele ngani ndatotosa de nam ndaqin'umhlana. Nindiqhubile ndisiwa ndivuka de ndakwazi ukuzimela. Lalani zimazi zakuthi, ithokazi lenu noko selomelele. Selilungele ukuthabathela kwindima eniphele kuyo, liqhube kumsebenzi enawuqalayo mhla natyala, nankcenkceshel'ukuxabis'imfundo. Lala maMbathane, ungabisakhala Matshaya ngoba akekho kuthi oyawuphinde abalis'imbali yokuvinj'ulwazi. Amasango avulekile Nkondekazi, isizukulwana sakho sizawuxhaphulwazi! Lala nawe Jwarhakazi! Jonga nasi esisidanga owawundithume sona mhla wathi ze ndifunde ndingaphezi de ndinxitywe idyas'ebomvu. Nto leyo ithi iminqweno yakho ifezekile wen'omazw'ayadala. Phumla ke maYarha, ngoba elathemba nokholo owalibeka kum mhla wandithiya amagama lisisikhumbuzo soxanduva olusemagxeni am. Phumla nawe Maduna, Nokhala, Msuthu, Jiyane. Mandl'amakhulu. Sivunguvung'esawis'indoda emahlangeni. Labalifutshan'ithuba lethu kodwa jonga, layiguqul'impilo yam. Sekunjenjenje kungenxa yakho Maduna omhle ngekhala lakhe. Xola ntombenkulu noko awusishiyanga sizinkedama. Sinemfundo, sinomsimelelo wokuxhathisa!!!

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ABSTRACT

Black women in South African continue to experience gender inequality that manifests through gender-based violence, underrepresentation of women in leadership positions at work as well as being subject to gender roles that leave them struggling to maintain a work-life balance. Hence this study aimed at examining the complex realities of women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha, uncovering their agencies and how women draw from their agencies meet their aspirations. Additionally, the study intended to offer a theoretical explanation of the young women's realities in the area of study. The researcher engaged in an ethnographic study in which 15 young women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha, in the Eastern Cape were scientifically observed and interviewed. The examination thereof led to the recognition of Ngangelizwe Township young women's agencies as embedded within experiences of vulnerability that is informed by the structuring of their social space. The finding led to the conclusion that the agencies of young women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha should be conceptualised as intertwined within experiences of instrumentality and susceptibility rather than recognised as free from the experiences of susceptibility. The outcomes of the study revealed that, despite the multiple forms of oppression, the black women in the townships continue to pursue their goals with some attaining their lifestyle aspirations. By uncovering the mechanisms and strategies employed by the women in the study, the young women's agencies were unearthed including the vulnerabilities that the women were exposed to when negotiating the agencies. Subsequently, the analysis resulted in the conceptualisation of an intersectional township habitus through which the dynamic realities of township women can be further explored. Based on the findings, the study identified a need for more research that would employ the intersectional township habitus lens to examine the lived experiences of young women in South African townships. The study further identified a need for more research into the economic strategies of women who access money through criminal activities, which was identified as one of the agencies that young women in Ngangelizwe Township employed when negotiating their realities.

Keywords: agency, vulnerabilities, intersectional township habitus.

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KEY CONCEPTS

A lounge:	This refers to a place such as So What Lounge, Kopano Lounge, Nongoloza and others. It is an upmarket nightclub that is furnished with a luxurious bar with comfortable couches and a dancing space. These nightclubs are known for hosting some of the prominent Deejays. These nightclubs are the places where young women often meet their blessers and where they often socialise with their blessers. This is where the expensive beverages are sold hence young women associate these social spaces with status as reflected by their dress code when going to these nightclubs and the photographs they take and post on social media when spending time in these night clubs.
Amarhuzu:	These are the older, more sophisticated criminals that typically rob banks and hijack cars. These criminals are locally respected and maintain a well-groomed posture. They are not easy to identify as they dress and look like business people in neat smart-outfits, unlike the younger criminals who do common robberies/house break-ins and who often use drugs.
Blessers:	These are rich men who spend money buying expensive gifts and taking young women on local and international holidays, usually Dubai, in exchange for sexual favours.
Intersectional township habitus:	This form of habitus is the predominant disposition within the township space identified for the purpose of this study. Township dispositions,

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including agency, resilience, hustling and vulnerability, are reflected through common-sense ideologies and the generated township language through which agents convey what it means to belong to the township space. These ideologies serve to form boundaries through which life goals, survival strategies and mechanisms are employed.

Passage: This is a pathway between two houses used as a short cut to get to the next area. These passages usually lie behind houses, making them dangerous because no one sees what people do within the passage. It is for this reason that criminals tend to rob people within passages but also because they are often without any lights rendering them unsafe, especially in the evenings.

Rock: This is slang for wearing or using items. It is applied particularly if the item worn is stylish or expensive and therefore recognised as a status symbol. Rock(ing) is also used as a compliment similar to slaying. A person 'rocks' when they are good-looking; making a fashion statement. They are also said to be 'on point' which is another way of complimenting them. 'Slay' is, however, limited to females while 'rock' is used when referring to both males and females but is most commonly used towards males because males do not 'slay'. Males 'rock'; they are 'on point'.

Shebeens: Shebeens/taverns are social places where people drink and socialise. The structure and activities differ depending on where the shebeens are located. For example, some shebeens in Ngangelizwe cater for the elderly like the shebeen in Ndesi street. This shebeen provides traditional

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beer-umqombothi and Chibuku, which is a commercial sorghum beer that is similar to the traditional umqombothi that is homemade. These beverages are popular among older people and are usually provided in black people's homes whenever there are traditional ceremonies.

Shisanyama: This is a social place where people buy and braai meat as well as socialise while eating the meat and enjoying alcoholic beverages. The atmosphere in shisanyama is different from that of a shebeen/tavern because people go to a shisanyama bringing their camping chairs and cooler boxes, the latter full of their preferred alcohol packed with ice cubes. These social spots are popular among black people, particularly on weekends where they can park their cars close by, listen to music and engage with one another.

Slay: Slay is a compliment given to someone who does a good job, particularly if the person is female. If there is a competition, slaying means they have outdone their competitors. If it concerns dressing, slaying means the person is dressed well and looks good. However, when used in the context of a slay queen, the word takes on a slightly different meaning. A slay queen has an image, and a lifestyle that is contrary to her socio-economic reality and this luxurious lifestyle is always displayed on social media.

Slay queens: Young women who use their beauty to attract rich men by dressing in appealing ways, often hanging around in places where they search for blessers. Slay queens often show-off their luxurious lifestyle on social media. This is a luxurious lifestyle that

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they afford as reflected by the clothes they wear, alcohol they drink and rich men they hang out with even though they live in the poorest conditions.

Tender boys: This is a term used to refer to men who have money that they have received through their businesses that often receive government tenders to provide services such fixing tar roads and other infrastructure. Tender boys are known for having money and are attractive as potential blessers for this reason. Hence dating a tender boy is sought after among slay queens in the area.

Weave: This is a form of hair extension often used by black women to style their hair, thereby giving them a modern look complemented by silky hair extensions. Brazilian and Peruvian hair are some of the expensive weaves which cost approximately R 1 500.00 per batch where a person needs a minimum of four batches to do their hair. The prices also range according to the length requirement with 8 inches costing less, being shorter and 32 inches, costing more as it is the longest. Brazilian and other expensive weaves are often kept for a month and taken off. The Brazilian and Peruvian hair is kept and reused after undergoing hair treatment. In contrast, the cheaper hair extensions (which cost roughly R 100) are not re-usable and are thrown away after use.

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CHAPTER 1 EXPLORING THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF YOUNG WOMEN'S REALITIES IN THE TOWNSHIP SPACE: RATIONALE

1.1 Introduction

This thesis offers an account of the lives, livelihoods and lifestyle choices of young women living in a township known as Ngangelizwe, in Mthatha, in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. Livelihoods in this study refer to the various ways in which the young women secure their socio-economic necessities such as clothing, education, shelter. This study probes multiple dimensions of the women's lives, including their familial and intimate unions. The standpoint of the study is that young women's social realities are best understood through scrutinising the intersectional structuring that underpins the socio-temporal spaces within which the realities are produced (Crenshaw, 1989; Collins 1990; Lewin et al., 2019; Moposho, 2016 and Segalo, 2015). In addition, this understanding should be mindful of the historical, socio-economic, and cultural processes shaping and defining these as fields of cultural production (Bourdieu; 1985; 1989;1993).

The researcher frequently refers to 'realities' in this thesis. By this, the researcher is denoting the lived experiences of the young women as shaped by their socio-economic contexts. It is crucial to think of young women's realities within the constructions of the townships because of the direct link to their financial livelihoods (Barrar, 2010; Bourdieu, 1985, 1990; 1993; Faragó, 2016; Lefebvre, 1991; Massey, 1994 and Mahajan, 2014). An examination of the social, economic, political and cultural constructions of townships, therefore, speaks to the nature of inequalities that characterise the historic construction of townships, locating these financial inequalities in the complex relationship between structure and the subjective experiences of women in townships Bourdieu (1985; 1989; 1993).

By suggesting that townships are socially constructed, this study proposes some of the ways in which the socio-economic inequalities deeply entrenched within the financial construction of these social spaces can be scrutinised so that we can uncover examples of the women's instrumentality (Bourdieu,1985; 1990; 1993; Faragó, 2016; Lefebvre, 1991 and Massey, 1994). By looking at the women's realities, the goals are to unearth their lifestyle choices and strategies along with the mechanisms they use to reach their goals. The examination is important because it uncovers key areas of focus and helps conceptualise effective approaches that can be used by government and non-governmental agencies (NGOs) to produce upliftment services that township women need.

1.2 Problem statement

South African women continue to experience gender inequality that manifests in gender-based violence despite the policies, as well as legislations aimed at protecting them and subsequently promote gender equality in society Naidoo (2018). The Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (2016) links the persistence of gender-based violence to the deeply embedded cultural norms such as patriarchy that favour men over women thus promoting unequal power imbalances in South Africa. The manifestation of this imbalance is mostly visible in under-resourced spaces such as South African townships. This suggests that cultural norms underlie gender inequality in households, religious and educational institutions, as well as among others, ensuring that men continue to dominate in societal institutions as guardians of hegemonic masculinities.

Graaff and Heinecken (2017: 632) similarly link the prevalence of gender-based violence in South African to deeply embedded patriarchal norms to which women are subjected. These are societal norms underlying perceptions, for instance, that wearing mini-skirts get women raped; hence girls need to be educated on how to dress. These gendered views promote the perception that women are the cause of their victimisation since they refuse to adhere to gendered cultural expectations. Willan et al. (2019: 1236) maintain patriarchy and poverty that persist in South African townships compromises young women's agencies in ways that continuously expose women to gender-based violence. Their view suggests that women's experiences of gender-based violence are shaped by multiple experiences of gender inequality often occurring simultaneously. This renders the setting in which the women negotiate their lived experiences complex.

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Scholars further note the persistence of gender inequality in South Africa and its negative implications in the lived experiences of women (Lewin et al., 2019; Moposho, 2016 and Segalo, 2015). For instance, Ncube's (2018) study indicates that black South African women continue to experience gender, race and class discrimination hampering them from reaching executive leadership positions in the workplace. Msibi (2012: 525) reflects on the marginalisation experienced by queer learners meaning learners who are not heterosexual such as lesbians in township schools. Msibi (2012) uncovers the various lived experiences of gendered discrimination that saw many of the students drop out before completing high school. Some of the queer learners received rape threats from teachers and other students,

among other experiences of gender-based violence. These experiences are indicative of gender discrimination.

Gordon and Collins (2013: 103) similarly allude to the experiences of sexual abuse that female university students experience in their intimate relationships on campus. Their study, as well as many others (see Allen, 2018; Mpani and Nsibande, 2015; Sibanda-Moyo, Khonje and Brobbey, 2017), indicates that gender inequality is still widespread in South African society underlying violent masculinities through which young women are subject to various forms of abuse. Its far-reaching impact continues to see young women killed violently by men as indicated by the violent murders of women in past few years: such as Gomolemo Legae (18 years old) - allegedly stabbed and set alight by a 19-year-old man; Leighandre Jegels (25 years old) - shot by her 30-year-old boyfriend; Precious Ramabulana (21 years old) - raped and stabbed 52 times by a 30-year-old man; Uyinene Mrwetyana (19 years old) - raped and murdered by a 42-year old man Theletsane (2019), and Tshegofatso Puleng (28 years old) - stabbed and hung on a tree by a 31-year old man Lindeque (2020).

It is the above-mentioned experiences of gender inequality and consequent gender-based violence among young women across South African spaces that make it important to continue examining the lived experiences of women in South Africa. This is the need that this study responds to in its specific focus on the realities of young women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha through an intersectional lens; thus, exploring the agencies of young women and how these agencies are sometimes compromised by the interplay of their gender, race and class that comprise townships' structures. By so doing, this study adds to the contributions made by scholars such as Allen (2018), Gouws (2017) and Ncube (2018) among others, whose examination of young women's gendered experiences is underpinned by the recognition of lived experiences as informed by multiple interlocking power dynamics. With this view in mind, the next discussion unpacks the objective of this study.

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1.3 Aim of the study

It is well-documented that women in townships suffer from poverty that is linked to unemployment, but survive nonetheless, therefore, indicating that they continue to devise means to meet their goals despite limitations posed by their socio-economic environment. The realities of these women are produced within a background shaped by a complex and often hierarchical resource distribution relationship among fields of cultural production,

creating a multifaceted environment within which their economic activities are produced (Bourdieu, 1985; 1990; 1993 and Mahajan, 2014). This complexity is underpinned by specific distributions of cultural, social, and economic capital within the township space. This study recognises that social spaces evolve, and so do the produced realities within these social spaces. It is with the above-mentioned understanding in mind that this study aims to scrutinise the lives of young women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha. The main purpose is to uncover the various ways in which the women construct themselves, unpacking the challenges that the women encounter as they negotiate their lived experiences.

- The aim of the study is to unearth the potential challenges that the young women face as a result of socio-economic vulnerabilities linked to their spatial location and
- To reveal the instrumentalities that are devised by the women to address the challenges that they meet.

1.4 Objective of study

It is the above-mentioned aim that guides the study's main objective of examining the livelihoods, lifestyle choices and construction of young women's realities in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha. This study, therefore, investigates the effects of deep and continuing economic hardship and its definitive and formative consequences on how women act, think and make agentic choices in Ngangelizwe Township. Such a study has not been done in the Eastern Cape Province before. Within this perspective, this study addresses its above-mentioned objective by:

- Examining and uncovering the heterogeneous lived experiences of young women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha;
- Investigating agencies that these women utilise as they negotiate their lifestyle choices through the construction and application of various survival strategies and mechanisms, and,
- Unearthing how the lived realities of young township women can be explained by the critical and simultaneous use of post-structuralist and intersectional theoretical viewpoints.

1.5 Research questions

Given the above objectives, the over-arching research question this study will answer is, 'how are the socio-economic realities of young women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha,

informed by and negotiated within the economic, social and cultural construction of this township?' Against this backdrop, this study adopts the following sub-questions:

- What are the lived experiences of young women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha?
- What mechanisms and strategies do the young women put in place as they negotiate their lived experiences?
- How can these women's lived realities be explained theoretically?

1.6 Rationale

It is by answering the above-mentioned questions that this study uncovers how young women's subjective realities are tied to their social locations. This viewpoint recognises townships as interwoven with issues of access to resources. This suggests that the setting of individuals within townships be considered in terms of interdependence between the flow of resources and agency within social spaces. There are hierarchical and fluctuating social experiences that enable varying engagements of exclusion and inclusion, power, and powerlessness, thereby generating heterogeneous realities that may characterise the experiences of young women within the township space.

This study provides an analysis that is aimed at generating practical solutions to the socio-economic challenges of young women within townships. This is achieved by employing Berger and Luckmann's (1966) notion of 'social construction of reality' and complementing this with Bourdieu's (1985) 'habitus'. Habitus describes the socialised mindset of societal members as reflected by their thinking, feeling and acting. The habitus generates societal member's aspirations as well as economic actions through which the aspirations are met (Bourdieu, 1985; 1989; 1990; 1993; Dumais, 2006; Ngarachu, 2014 and Silva, 2016). Examining the women's realities through these notions will highlight the agencies that young women in Ngangelizwe Township draw from as they engage in their ranging economic activities. This understanding will enable the conceptualisation of campaigns aimed at reducing young women's risk-taking socio-economic actions, thus curbing young women's susceptibilities incurred through engagements in context-specific agencies.

With the above view in mind, this study employs the notion of field of cultural production to explain the township in which the township habitus is produced because the township is recognised as having its own culture that is internally produced within the township space (Bourdieu, 1985; 1989; 1990; 1993). This culture is recognised in how it informs contextual

understanding that presents the township as unique from other localities, while subsequently endowing women with contextual perspectives that are unique from those of women outside townships. In addition, the study employs the notion of capital to denote the varying resources that are available within the township space (Bourdieu, 1985; 1989; 1990; 1993). These capitals (economic, social, symbolic and cultural) are recognised in their contextual meaning, thus suggesting that in addition to their broad societal meaning, capitals gain contextual significances as informed by the norms and values in the townships as cultural fields (Bourdieu, 1985; 1989; 1990; 1993).

The study employs the notion of agency to define the aspirations and social and economic actions employed by young women to meet their desires. These agencies are recognised as shaped by the townships through the meanings they give to what is and is not important, while subsequently giving the women ideas of how to pursue what is recognised as valuable within their townships. This means that the township is recognised in how it endows women with rules of engagement through which they negotiate their realities. The study employs the notion of intersectionality to designate the complexity underlying the rules of engagement as well as the context in which the women access the resources, thus drawing from views of scholars such as Anthias (2012), Brah and Phoenix (2004), Crenshaw (1989), Collins (1990) and Hulko (2009). The scholars (Anthias, 2012; Brah and Phoenix; 2004; Crenshaw, 1989; Collins, 1990 and Hulko, 2009) suggest that access to resources occurs within a complex environment that is shaped by multiple experiences of interdependent systems of inequality. The study subsequently employs the notion of vulnerability to signify the exposure to risks and hardship that the women face as they navigate through their environment negotiating their realities.

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1.7 Original contribution of the study

This study provides original contributions in the way in which it:

- Draws on theory to examine the realities of women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha.
- Conceptualises Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha as an intersectional field of cultural production.
- Contributes to existing literature that focuses on the link between the vulnerabilities characterising the intersectional township fields and the experiences of young women in these fields underlying the women's agencies.

- Provides original, intersectional, and certainly new findings and analysis.
- Studies the socio-economic realities of young women in the Eastern Cape Province in novel ways and in so doing provides new ways to examine the continuing economic hardship and its definitive and formative consequences on how women act, think and make agentic choices in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha in the Eastern Cape Province.
- Uses ethnographic qualitative research methods to tell stories of the lived experiences of young women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha.

1.8 Overview of the remaining chapters

Chapter Two: **The exploration of the lived experiences of young women in township spaces is observed**. The aspirations of township women are explored against the backdrop of their socio-economic realities. The young women's aspirations are observed against those of young women in Sub-Saharan Africa, thus placing young women's goals within a broader context. Subsequently, the aspirations of township women are viewed within the South African context, that is exploring how the women's lifestyle goals are shaped by the wider South African structures. The exploration enables an investigation of the uniqueness of townships in how they shape women's realities. The discussion in chapter two is therefore important in how it provides an understanding of the lived experiences of township women as characterised by their goals, economic engagements and vulnerabilities as well as agencies through which they meet their goals while also attempting to minimise the risks experienced as they negotiate their goals.

Chapter Three: **Towards a theoretical conceptualisation of young women's township realities.** This discussion relies on notions such as intersectionality, agency, vulnerability, socialisation, habitus, capitals, and fields to give meaning to the realities of the young women. These notions are used to explain how young women's economic actions are informed by lifestyle goals whose meanings are influenced by global culture through the media as well as township culture through its cultural constructs. This chapter, therefore, introduces the notion of habitus through a discussion that suggests social spaces tend to influence social constructions of realities in context-based ways, providing social agents within these social spaces with unique context-based tools with which they engage in the social construction of their realities. These relative tools are embedded within the women's perspectives, making it necessary to understand the habitus as shaped by the social

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construction of space. This chapter, therefore, provides an examination of township specific tools that characterise the habitus of young women within these social spaces, examining how these tools are used in the social construction of reality within these township spaces. Since township spaces are recognised as intersectional spaces within which setting categories interact in ways that deem township spaces as complex spaces, this conceptualisation of the township space provides the background upon which the notion of an intersectional township habitus is framed. This notion provides the background within which aspiration and lifestyle choices are formulated within these social spaces.

Chapter Four: **A reflection on ethnographic fieldwork.** This chapter unpacks the methods of inquiry employed when investigating livelihoods, lifestyle choices and the construction of young women's realities. This is a qualitative study that embraces an ethnographic approach. The requisite subjective perceptions and understandings come from the participants' accounts of their lived experiences, social actions, and behaviours and from the context in which these occur Ulin et al. (2002). As such, this approach enables the researcher to capture and understand more fully the experiences, risks and motivations shaping women's actions Ulin et al. (2002). This section outlines how this approach allowed for an in-depth examination of these actions as well as interpretations and implications attached to these by the research participants. The data collection experiences are explained together with the strategies employed by the researcher to ensure that rich data was collected. The employed sampling method is discussed in relation to its strengths as employed in the current study. Participants selection is discussed as well as the strategies used in gaining the trust of research participants.

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Chapter Five: **'Bare' realities and aspiring for 'better' lifestyles among young women in Ngangelizwe Township.** This chapter provides a detailed qualitative description with figures provided illustrating factors that inform the lived experiences of young women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha. It provides key findings that inform understandings of the factors that underlie the setting in which the women negotiate their realities. The key findings in this chapter suggest that young women's realities within Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha are produced in a social space that is characterised by structural vulnerabilities. These are economic factors such as unemployment, spatial congestion, criminal activity as well as alcohol and drug use that form the background to the context in which the lived experiences are negotiated. These factors exist with desires for better lives compared to bare lives, thus shaping the setting in which young women construct their realities. The discussion provided

in this chapter answers the first research objective of investigating the various ways in which women's lives are constrained in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha.

Chapter Six: **Mechanisms and strategies employed by young women: in search of independence and freedom.** This chapter unpacks the approaches that young women engage in as they attempt to negotiate their economic realities, thus answering the second research objective. This is the objective of investigating agencies that these women utilise as they negotiate their lifestyle choices. The financial approaches employed by the young women are understood as being shaped by the socio-economic environment within which the women are situated. This framing is underpinned by the availability and/or lack of availability of cultural, social, and economic capital within the social space. A fiscal characterisation of social space creates the context in which the adoption of alternative financial livelihoods occurs. This chapter is significant in how it provides ways of comprehending the township space as a structured environment, thus unearthing how its structuring underpins the complex and often nuanced lifestyle choices of young women within the township spaces.

Chapter Seven: **Benz'icebo: economic action through a continuum of dependency, instrumentality, and vulnerability**. This section deals with the significance of the study as well as its original contributions to studies of young women. It builds on arguments made by scholars such as Bhana (2012), Dunkle et al. (2006a), Howell and Vincent (2014), Leclerc-Madlala (2004), Mampane (2018), Masvawure (2010), Wojcicki (2002b) and Zembe et al. (2013). These scholars tended to take the position that while the need to survive (or attain 'bare life') was often the main driving force determining young women's agencies, these women also displayed a predominant desire to consume. This consumption was related to prestige and a 'better life', as opposed to a bare life. As such, it provides discussions of aspirations that underpin the young women's desired better life, revealing the instrumentalities devised by the women and unpacking the vulnerabilities they navigate through as they exercise their agency. It subsequently presents an argument that the realities of young women in township spaces should be examined through the notion of an intersectional township habitus, thus answering the third research objective of unearthing how the lived realities of young township women can be explained theoretically.

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1.9 Conclusion

This introductory chapter serves to present the main approach that this study adopts when examining the social construction of realities among young women in township spaces. Key focus areas for this study are presented as they relate to the main objective of examining how lived experiences of young women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha are negotiated. The following discussion examines the lived experiences of township women, laying the foundation for new contributions that this study promises.

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CHAPTER 2 EXPLORING LIVED EXPERIENCES OF YOUNG WOMEN IN TOWNSHIPS: DEPRIVATION, AGENCY, AND VULNERABILITY

2.1 Introduction

This literature review chapter focuses on the lived experiences of young women, thus exploring the factors that underlie their heterogeneous realities. The discussion pays attention to the socio-economic factors informing the environments in which women's realities are negotiated. This is done through examining studies of scholars such as Berger (2010), Bongazana (2014), Madyibhi (2017), Masvawure (2010), Motseki and Oyedemi (2017), Soper (2009) and Zhan and He (2011) among others who maintain that young women aspire to lifestyles demonstrating affluence; a more comfortable socio-economic reality than the scarcity often reflected by common living patterns. These are better lifestyle patterns that the scholars recognise as being shaped by the media. Different media sources, such as television, Instagram and Facebook distribute images of what prosperous women should look like, including luxurious lifestyles, in an idealised form, thus presenting the picture of a better life to which young women should aspire to.

It is within the above-mentioned perspective that scholars such as Masvawure (2010: 864) and Motseki and Oyedemi (2017: 146) maintain that the media provide the means for television personalities to display their constructions of wealth and beauty in ways that influence feminine ideals. These influences even reach young women from impoverished backgrounds who may have no access to legitimate means of attaining standards portrayed through the media thus leaving the women to imagine their own ways through which to attain the aspirations. By reflecting on arguments made by scholars such as Chohan and Langa (2011), Chireshe et al. (2010), De Lannoy et al. (2018a) and Jewkes et al. (2006), this section inspects the possible impact played by the township environment in shaping the lived experiences of young women. It will also pay attention to the women's aspirations, instrumentalities, and potential vulnerabilities as they negotiate their lifestyle choices.

With the above introduction in mind, the following discussion examines township realities in how they are informed by economic vulnerabilities that often characterise South African townships. The discussion, therefore, pays attention to aspects such as dearth of employment opportunities, overpopulation and spatial congestion and alternative economic engagements that form the background to the lived experiences of women living in townships.

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2.2 An overview of South African townships

South African townships are spaces that are characterised by overpopulation with large families living in shared, small rented spaces (Fataar, 2007; Hunter and Posel, 2012; Mosoetsa, 2011; Swartz et al, 2012 and Xulu-Gama, 2017). Scholars such as Diaz (2018), Mosoetsa (2011), and Sekhampu (2012) define townships as spaces of pervasive chronic poverty underlying households in which low levels of economic activity, a dearth of employment opportunities, as well as a high crime rate is common. According to Diaz (2018), the nature of these spaces speaks to the desperate economic needs of those who occupy township spaces. According to Sekhampu (2012), the inability of many who inhabit townships to satisfy their essential needs as well as the inferior brick, mud brick and/or corrugated steel poor quality housing structures in South African townships is reflective of the poverty that continues to characterise these locations.

Hunter and Posel (2012), Mosoetsa (2011) and Xulu-Gama (2017) describe townships as locations characterised by four-roomed houses constituting the architectural backbone of townships where cheap accommodation was allocated to married men with employment. According to these scholars, these locations are now home to the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) houses (Hunter and Posel, 2012; Mosoetsa, 2011 and Xulu-Gama, 2017). These are low-cost houses built by the post-apartheid government and provided to previously disadvantaged societal members within these social spaces. These houses are different from the ones provided by the apartheid government in that they recognise townships as inhabited by families hence providing accommodation catering for familial needs such as the cohabitation of parents, children and grandparents, which the apartheid government did not do. However, RDP houses are relatively small, given the needs of township occupants, some of whom have many children and are sharing their homes with extended family members.

In view of poverty as well as limited employment opportunities, household heads in townships have found creative ways to earn money to meet their financial needs. Hence, Fataar's (2007) suggestion that backyard letting is an essential aspect of the township context due to the income it generates for women who form the majority of household heads in these locations. This is because property owners use their yard space to build rooms they rent to people who do not own property. While this situation leads to overcrowding due to the lack of regulations governing the construction and occupation of these backyard dwellings, it also

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speaks to the resourcefulness of township dwellers. Chireshe et al. (2010), Igumbor et al. (2011), Mbundwini (1999) and Tsheleza et al. (2019) subsequently argue that overcrowding is a norm within township houses where small houses are occupied by up to four generations who due to lack of resources share small rented places. Mosoetsa (2011) suggests that space became a contentious household issue; its use made difficult by age and gender dynamics, reflected in the sleeping arrangement in which some people in the houses sleep on mattresses on the floor while others sleep on the couches in these crowded households, which still holds today.

Sekhampu (2012), in his study on poverty in a South African township, Kwakwatsi, maintains the economic situation of township dwellers continued to deteriorate even in the post-apartheid context. He argues the failure of the social, economic and political policies to address the systemic causes of racially-based poverty that informed the conception of townships has resulted in the reproduction of poverty in the lives of township dwellers. Diaz (2018), Mosoetsa (2011) and Webster and Francis (2019) consequently suggest that many of the households within townships do not have significant assets at their disposal as these are depleted daily due to the struggle to put food on the table. Hence, people in these locations supplement their low total household income through micro-lending institutions or individuals (mashonisa) due to their desperate need for money.

Supplementing household income through micro-lending is not sustainable, and it is also often risky, especially for those who are unable to repay the loans. Mosoetsa (2011) argues that the desperate situation within these areas and a reduction in the number of people making use of stokvels are noted. Stokvels are a popular way of saving money, whereby people contribute an agreed-upon amount to a collective pot/fund every month (Bophela and Khumalo, 2019). According to these scholars, people within these townships are no longer able to afford the monetary contributions to these types of savings funds due to their socio-economic realities (Bophela and Khumalo, 2019). It is within this context that state welfare through state pensions and child support grants become the primary stable source of income.

The characterisation of South African townships suggests that they were socially engineered to produce gendered racialised cheap labour according to scholars such as Fataar (2007), Webster and Webster (2019), Hunter and Posel (2012), Swartz et al. (2012) and Xulu-Gama (2017). Hence, the lack of investment in well-resourced schools through which township dwellers could improve their socio-economic positioning. The lack of amenities within these social spaces should, therefore, be understood within the apartheid construction of South

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African townships. This construction is captured in apartheid policies such as Section 10(1) of the Native (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act, as amended in 1955 and 1956[1] through which townships were produced.

Through the social, economic, and political engineering of townships as locations of gendered economic inequality, and by enclosing this social construction with laws and sanctions, these construction boundaries would separate townships from surrounding areas. This means South African townships were constructed as unique in themselves and in relation to the surrounding locations. An effect of this unique construction was these locations receiving fewer resources towards infrastructures such as libraries and laboratories, thus creating inferior schools depriving them and those inhabiting these spaces of a decent education and all its benefits. Notably, access to education and its resultant advantages would lead to improved livelihoods by generating perceptions and approaches to life that reproduce conditions within these settings, as well as an enhanced social standing of townships in relation to the surrounding locations. This argument is proposed by scholars such as Fataar (2007) and Webster and Francis (2019), who maintain the lack of resources in peri-urban schools is one of the ways in which the apartheid system excluded township youth from economic freedom.

Nortje (2017: 49) similarly maintains that young township dwellers are denied access to a good education as well as employability and improving their living conditions. This is significant because as this scholar suggests, denial of proper education implies the denial of economic freedom through access to suitable employment and all its benefits. Hence, education, skills and knowledge are important in how they link not only to occupation but also to better socio-economic status. This is because occupation and its wages determine the lifestyle an individual can afford. In this way, wages are linked to social status, thereby

[1] Section 10(1) of the Native (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act, as amended in 1955 provided that no native shall remain for more than 72 hours in an urban area unless he produced proof in the manner prescribed that: (a) he has birth, resided continuously in such area; (b) he had worked there continuously for one employer for ten years, or had been there continuously and lawfully for fifteen years and not employed outside the area, and while being in the area has not been sentenced to a fine exceeding 50 pounds or to imprisonment for a period exceeding six months; or (c) was the wife, unmarried daughter or son under eighteen years of age - the age at which he would be liable for the payment of general tax under the Native Taxation and Development Act 41 of 1925; any Bantu mentioned in paragraphs (a) or (b) of this subsection and after lawful entry into such prescribed area, ordinarily resided with him, or (d) had been granted permit to remain by an employment officer appointed to manage a labour bureau in terms of provision of paragraph (a) of subsection 6 of section 21 of the Native Labour Regulation Act of 1911, due regard being had to the availability of accommodation in the Bantu residential areas in the case of a work-seeker or otherwise by the local authority.

granting power which is linked to one's ability to afford socio-economically related privileges such as access to cars and houses. The link between education, social status and lifestyle choices is particularly relevant in a South African context as this is a society in which general class position is shaped by access to education (Seekings, 2003). To indicate the role played by education in social class positioning, Seekings (2003) identified five class categories that build status positioning in a South African socio-economic space:

- Upper-class: managers and professionals
- Semi-professional class: teachers and nurses
- Intermediate class: routine white-collar, skilled supervisory workers
- Core working class: semi-skilled and unskilled workers (except farm and domestic workers)
- Marginal working class: farm and domestic workers.

All these economic positions are shaped by one's access to education due to the reliance on formal employment within the South African society. This indicates the disadvantaging implication of lack of access to education and the possible link to the reproduction of inequalities. Hence, scholars such as Ambrasat et al. (2016: 999) suggest that living conditions are linked to one's economic environment, which subsequently shapes one's perspective and approach to life. Social action is, thus, reproduced through the way in which social agents are fashioned by the material conditions of their socio-economic environment.

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The migration of the majority of black people from the township to areas reserved for white people should be examined in terms of how it is reflective of improved livelihoods that follow the acquisition of educational credentials. The transition to democracy opened political boundaries; providing opportunities enabling those who had been locked in townships by political policies free mobility. Hence, those with money were able to relocate providing themselves and their families as well as households an opportunity to live within neighbourhoods endowed with better educational qualifications and the resultant better access to jobs through which their socio-economic status improved. They left townships to those unable to afford to relocate to former white locations and their associated socio-economic benefits. The transition has made these former white spaces even more attractive to those whose financial conditions are still grim because they are locked in townships economically even though the political circumstances have changed. Hence, by consistently

being locked in these locations even when political circumstances allow, these locations provide a reaffirmed sense of socio-economic destitution. This situation has implications in how those locked in townships may view themselves (Ngarachu, 2014: 59).

The above perspective, shared by Swartz et al. (2012: 32), states that the youthful stage represents a period within which people dream of their future, imagining a better tomorrow. However, for young women within the townships, these dreams occur in an environment where they are enclosed or locked in, as suggested earlier, within vulnerabilities. This is a context of structural violence where poverty, poor education, and the crime-prone environment they inhabit are not conducive to realising dreams. Furthermore, the resources necessary for getting ahead are almost non-existent. It is, therefore, within this background that Ramphele (1989) conceptualised township spaces as spaces of confusion where families, schools and communities were all in crisis. The foundation here lies in the production of South African townships, and the reproduction speaks of how these locations are internalised and externalised in ways that replicate their disadvantages.

Chohan and Langa (2011: 91) maintain that for women in townships, childhood is challenging because life is an interplay of social isolation and financial constraints. This is the context in which sexual exploration begins very early in life as the women use these intimate relations as a means of forging a sense of belonging. This sense of belonging is framed within notions of peer pressure, and with children not receiving sufficient guidance and sexual education from the adults in their households. There is, therefore, a need to recognise how the structuring of South African townships produces overlapping experiences of scarcity that forms the background against which young women imagine their lifestyle goals.

Bhana and Pattman (2011) maintain that in poverty-stricken township contexts, fashion might be positively identified with the middle class and as such used to prove an identity other than that of poverty as characteristic of township realities. This means that although the need to survive (or attain 'bare life') is important, the need to consume may take priority among young women because of its link to better social status. Investing in physical appearance might be even more critical for young women from impoverished backgrounds as it may allow them the means to extend beyond their class position and the socio-economic realities linked to this position. This increases their confidence and allows them to fit into global social constructions of how an ideal young woman should look.

It is therefore with the preceding view in mind that scholars such as Madyibi (2017: 34) maintain that the desire to acquire and consume displayed by young women in townships may stem from a place of wanting to feel important. The yearning for modern experiences among these young women in townships is rooted in the material realities that characterise these locations they inhabit; areas which are not reflective of modernity Salo (2009: 15). Hence, these young women opt for fictional accounts of gendered cosmopolitanism, which serve to resolve the apparent socio-economic contradictions they embody.

It is with the above understanding of South African townships in mind that the following section examines the livelihoods of young women in South African townships. The discussion aims at reflecting on how the young women's lives are shaped by the above-mentioned experiences of poverty and limited access to resources underpinning township realities. Other socio-economic factors interacting with the financial vulnerabilities in producing the lived experiences of women in township spaces will be examined. Thus, building on observations of scholars such as Allen (2018), Gordon and Collins (2013), Mpani and Nsibande (2015) and Sibanda-Moyo et al. (2017), who maintain that in townships young women's realities result from an interplay of multiple overlapping structuring structures such as poverty, patriarchy and vulnerability to violence characterising contexts, in which young women's lived experiences are produced.

2.3 Locating young women's livelihoods within South African township realities

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The above discussion of economic realities that characterise township spaces indicates that although South Africa is said to belong to all who live in it Freedom Charter (1955), experiences of belonging in South Africa are far from homogenous. Hence, Mkhwanazi (2010) and Swartz et al. (2012) maintain that although the post-apartheid government has been attempting to decrease the socio-economic challenges inherent from the apartheid regime, more of these continue to shape the realities of South African women.

It is within the above understanding that scholars such as Nuttall (2004: 731) maintain that realities of young women in South Africa should be recognised within their continuities between the past, characterised by the apartheid system and its socio-economic engineering, and the present democratic system and its rainbow nation ideology. The recognition should be based on an understanding of the socio-economic implications of the apartheid system and its political standpoint that saw notions of inclusion and exclusion based on multiple

experiences of discrimination that continue to entangle black young women within multifaceted experiences of financial deprivation (Ramutsindela, 2001).

It is within the above view that the following section attempts to locate township women's experiences within features such as socio-economic imbalance. It also recognises these features as intertwined with experiences of patriarchy and how it shapes gendered access to resources thus informing the prevalence of gender-based violence among other experiences that tend to characterise young women's lived experiences in townships. The discussion is therefore mindful of views by scholars such as Eshiet (2008), Hawkins et al. (2009), Nwosu and Ndinda (2018) and Mensah (2020), who maintain that township women's livelihoods are negotiated within a gendered setting often characterised by feminised poverty. This is a lack of access to basic resources such as shelter and food resulting from surviving on less than $1.90 a day characterising many female-headed households (Bhana, 2012; Swartz et al., 2012; Wood et al., 2008). These are households that exhibit large numbers of household members, many of whom are unemployed and dependent on the household head (Beegle et al., 2016: 12). It is within the gendered experiences of economic deprivation that many women continue to live in poverty compared to men (Nwosu and Ndinda, 2018). Women's experiences of economic exclusion are exacerbated by their reduced access to jobs and education (Eshiet, 2008: 126). Women struggle economically as they take on the unpaid gendered role of caring for household members, adding more burdens to their limited resources, thus reflecting the complex interconnecting causes of women's feminised poverty which when unaddressed continue to hinder young women from achieving better livelihoods (Kuosmanen et al., 2016: 469).

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McFerson (2010), Mensah (2020) and Nwosu and Ndinda (2018) share a similar view to Kuosmanen et al. (2016) maintaining that women's limited access to economic opportunities is responsible for much of the economic challenges that characterise their lives. This, together with gender-neutral economic policies, fails to empower women in ways that may lead to their emancipation and economic freedom (Mensah. 2020: 544). These economic factors underlie women's multifaceted heterogeneous experiences of economic deprivation that form the varying experiences of disadvantaged backgrounds against which young women imagine their lifestyles. This means that young women's livelihoods should be examined against the socio-economic setting in which they occur in order to understand the implications of the dialectic interplay between their socio-economic background and access to opportunities in negotiating women's realities (Mensah, 2020: 545). The above

perspective suggests that although women's lives are not identical, there is a need to recognise many of them as influenced by gendered experiences of economic, physical and emotional experiences of vulnerability that characterise the many lived experiences of women in townships (Eshiet, 2008: 124).

Pons-Duran et al. (2019) and Hakura et al. (2016) share in the above view proposing that even though there are many achievements made in South Africa in improving the socio-economic positions of women, thus addressing gendered inequality and its resultant financial vulnerabilities visible among women, a lot more needs to be done. This means notwithstanding accomplishments such as increased female labour participation; efforts have to be made to ensure more women enrol in educational institutions. There also needs to be improved access to health services through which many young women can make informed reproductive health decisions. A lot more still needs to be done to alleviate gender inequality and its negative effect resulting from patriarchy through norms and values that limit young women's socio-economic freedom, as indicated in the following discussion.

2.3.1 Patriarchy, hegemonic masculinities and resultant gender-based vulnerabilities

Gordon and Collins (2013: 103), Graaff and Heinecken (2017: 632) and The Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (2016) suggest that patriarchy is deeply entrenched within the fabrics of township norms, values and customs such that it is often considered to be a normal way of life. Patriarchy here denoting the unequal distribution of power that underlies the prevalent societal control of hegemonic masculinities in social, economic, cultural and ideological institutions.

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Patriarchy underlies the perpetuation of heteronormative socio-economic practices in township locations through which women are subject to discrimination through labels such as tomboy and isitabane (Ademulika, 2018: 340 and Diraditsile and Ontetse, 2017). This discriminative heteronormative culture persists despite the progressive constitution and its commitment to gender equality (Naidoo, 2018). This indicates the extensive impact of the failure to implement legislature and policies that were intended to ensure greater access to justice to survivors of gender-based violence crimes through which many women continue to negotiate their realities within a position of fear of victimisation.

Human Rights Watch (2011), Kekana (2017) and Msibi (2012) maintain that rigid social and cultural norms for appropriate feminine and masculine behaviour continue to manifest in township spaces informing the lived experiences of women in these locations. These

gendered expectations result in women who do not conform to these norms living a life of fear and self-policing. This can inhibit their ability to finish school or obtain and keep a job and can also expose them to rejection and ridicule both at home and in public spaces.

Msibi (2012), in his study, reflects that young women living in disadvantaged locations such as townships are among the most marginalised and vulnerable members of South Africa's lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) population as they are prone to rape threats, which cause young women to leave high school before finishing. Kekana (2017) similarly reveals in his study that black communities such as townships are deep-rooted within a culture that preserves hegemonic masculinity while punishing homosexuality and any other masculinity or femininity that does not to conform with its norms and expectations.

The punishment occurs in varying forms of abuse, one of which is through rape. Hence, Lake (2017) suggests that rape is one of the ways in which patriarchy reaffirms its power by creating fear, enforcing submission and punishing defiance. This means that rape is one of the ways in which men communicate who is in charge and who is not, who matters and who does not, as well as who makes the rules of engagement and who does not. It is within this perspective that 'corrective rape', which refers to the raping of women by men to 'cure' her them from lesbianism continues to be practised in townships against lesbians. It is a way in which hegemonic masculinities reaffirm their power through gender-based violence.

Gender-based violence is complex, and as such, it is difficult to draw a clean line between experiences of rape and murder on the grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression as well as rape and violation on other grounds. This difficulty is due to the many varying contexts in which young women are sexually violated by men in township spaces. For example, men rape women who do not respond to their sexual advances, women who refuse to date or have sex with men, women who are perceived to be disrespectful towards men, and those who are seen as asserting their rights are also punished and silenced by men through rape (Human Rights Watch, 201; Kaufman and Stavrou, 2004 and Naidoo, 2018).

UNAIDS (2019: 6) maintains that an estimate of one in every three women has experienced physical and/or sexual violence most of which is at the hands of their intimate partners, with many of the women resultantly killed by their abusive partners. Human Rights Watch (2011) suggest there is under-reporting of sexual assault by masculine-presenting lesbians among other vulnerable groups who may be particularly anxious about the perceived feminising

effect of rape while also silenced by fear of secondary victimisation because of their sexual orientation and/or gender expression. The under-reporting makes it challenging to have a clear picture of the range of violence and discrimination that these women suffer in their daily lives.

The above discussion, therefore, suggests that young women in heterosexual relationships are most vulnerable to being sexually assaulted by their partners, ex-partners or by family members and other acquaintances that are usually known to them. However, lesbians are often attacked by strangers whom they meet in public spaces as well as people in communities who may know them but are not acquainted with them.

Similar to rape, physical abuse is a common experience that young women tend to suffer in the hands of men in townships. Township young women are vulnerable to physical abuse by intimate partners who use violence to 'discipline' women, thus enforcing patriarchal understandings of love that are intertwined with experiences of violence (Willan et al., 2019). The experiences of physical violence often interplay with emotional violence through which young women experience infidelity, with the men hitting, slapping or shouting at the women when questioning their unrestrained behaviour.

In addition, male jealousy tends to see young women locked in their partners' shacks to prevent them from interacting with other people, thus indicating how violence is immersed in young women's day-to-day realities. The gendered violence that is suffered by women occurs within a setting characterised by the prevalence of human trafficking to which many young women are vulnerable, suggesting that young women's livelihoods are imagined within unsafe township spaces that are widespread with violent masculinities (Hakura et al., 2016: 6). Figure 1 depicts the gendered vulnerability of women in South Africa.

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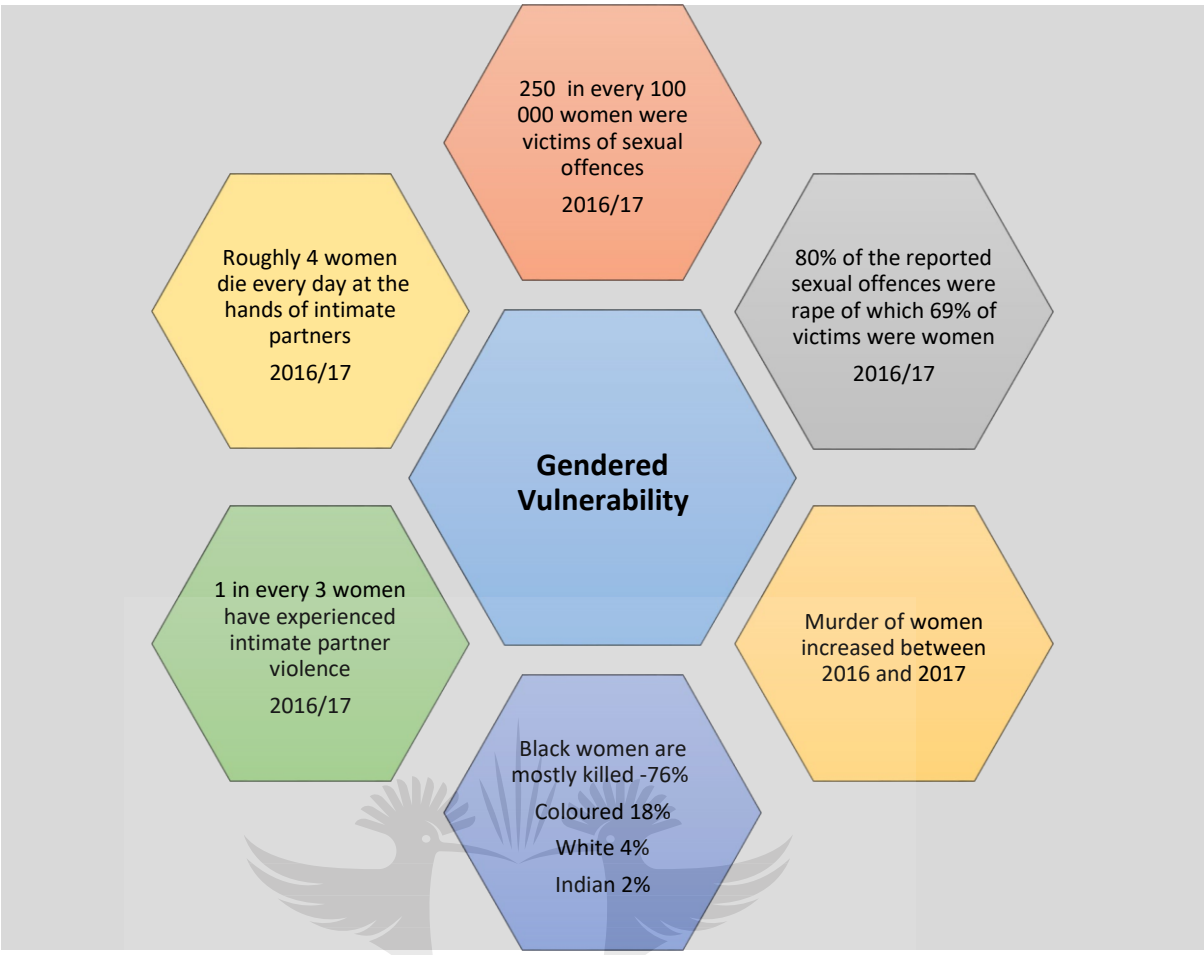

Figure 1: Estimates of gendered vulnerabilities experienced by women in South Africa. Source: StatsSA (2018)

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Although all women in South Africa are generally vulnerable, as indicated in Figure 1, township women's vulnerability is exacerbated by the normalisation of violence in townships. As suggested by The Centre for Study of Violence and Reconciliation (2019), Swartz (2010) and Swartz et al. (2012) township violence manifests in gang-related crime which is a common feature of township realities coupled with lawlessness as well as a culture of excessive drinking which are some of the characteristics that make up the concept of ekasi. Ekasi is a colloquial isiXhosa term meaning township, similar to the hood or ghetto that is found elsewhere in the world. Ikasi style refers to the ways in which youth rationalise their participation in behaviours such as crime, violence, sex, alcohol and substance abuse which are not socially acceptable in order to attain markers of belonging and sense of identity through alternative means (Swartz et al., 2012).

The normalisation of violence as a feature of ekasi perpetuates carrying knives and guns; which are weapons used by men to scare and coerce women into giving in to sexual demands

through which some of the women fall pregnant while others contract sexually transmitted infections. It is within the above view of the township that Swartz (2010) suggests townships are a space of perpetual violence in which its dwellers commonly witness the assaulting, robbing and killing of people. This means that young women in township spaces are aware of violent masculinities as they frequently see these masculinities at play during street fights and robberies. These young women are aware of women's shared experiences of intimate violence as they bear witness to some of these in their households and some from their personal experiences (Swartz, 2010; Swartz et al., 2012 and The Centre for Study of Violence and Reconciliation, 2019).

It is this excessive violence that makes townships unique locations in how these spaces are experienced by young women, thus serving as a complex environment in which young women negotiate their free will. With the above view in mind, the following section examines young women's lifestyle goals that underlie their economic agencies. The discussion is followed by an exploration of women's mechanisms employed towards meeting their goals, and subsequently, an examination of agencies used by young women to meet their aspirations.

2.3.2 Exploring young women's lifestyle aspirations in township spaces

Despite the vulnerabilities that characterise the township environment, young women in these spaces have lifestyle goals. There is a desire to consume underlying young women's lifestyle choices, thus countering the view that portrays young women as victims of poverty whose economic actions are predominantly driven by survival needs. The lifestyle goals that young women in South African townships have are similarly shared by young women outside of township spaces. This view is shared by scholars such as Hawkins et al. (2009), Howell and Vincent (2014), Leclerc-Madlala (2004), Masvawure (2010), Mensah (2020), Wojcicki (2002a) and Zembe et al. (2013) who have observed young women's lifestyle aspirations across many societies in Africa. Mensah (2020: 547), for example, proposes that there is a growing pursuit for a lifestyle that portrays affluence, economic freedom and social power among young women in Nigeria. This lifestyle is fuelled by the association of material consumption with independence, choice and prestige, which are some of the aspirations visible among young women of varying economic backgrounds. A similar view is shared by Masvawure (2010: 861) who maintains that there is a desire for flashiness that is displayed by young women in Zimbabwe, underlying their consumption of fashionable items such as clothing. These luxury items give young women who have access to them, a better social

status than those who do not have access. Hence, as Masvawure (2010: 864) suggests, the pressure to be fashionable is not unique to young women from financially disadvantaged backgrounds. However, it is common across economic backgrounds, demonstrating how images of affluence are communicated through the media in ways that shape young women's choices.

Hawkins et al. (2009: 173) made a similar observation in their study of young women in Maputo, Mozambique recognising that young women idealised a lifestyle that is driven by pursuits of trendy clothes, drinking beverages in exclusive bars, riding in expensive cars and owning the latest cellphones. These are material desires the young women interpret within notions of demonstrating freedom, affluence and independence, meaning the young women's lifestyle goals are aspired to with an understanding that they give them social power and social status. The above view is similar to one shared by Berger (2010), Bongazana (2014), Madyibhi (2017), Soper (2009) and Zhan and He (2011) who maintain that young women in South Africa use brands to serve as a bridge helping to construct and maintain symbolic borders between themselves and those who cannot afford these brands. This indicates that South African young women, like those in other Sub-Saharan African countries, are driven by the widespread desire to consume. Hence, material consumption of clothes, accessories and beauty products has become an important identity marker for post-apartheid South African youth (Howell and Vincent, 2014, and Leclerc-Madlala, 2004).

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The above discussion suggests there is a prevailing occupation with aspirations of financial security, freedom and independence marking a shift in the way young women see themselves as well as their role in society (Masvawure, 2010, Wojcicki, 2002a; Zembe et al., 2013). It is within the above-mentioned recognition that scholars such as Wojcicki (2002a) distinguished between agencies survival driven lifestyle goals and those driven by the pleasure of consumption and its better status benefits thus indicating the heterogeneity underlying young women's lifestyle aspirations. The scholar's observations of young women's aspirations open up discussions about the implications of the change in young women's lifestyle goals to the understanding and performance of gendered roles. It is, therefore, within the above observation that this study examines young women's aspirations. It explores how they are shaped by the shared trend that embraces gendered identities and roles that promise them autonomy, social status and exercise of free will, thus forging new images of independent womanhood. These images are symbolised by material acquisition through which they communicate the benefits of their independence.

With the above view in mind, the following discussion explores how young women from townships negotiate economic resources through which their imagined lifestyle goals can be realised. The discussion takes note of views shared by scholars such as Shefer and Strebel (2012: 58) who suggest young women's aspirations towards middle-class consumerism and status are often embraced against a background of socio-economic deprivation. Resource deprivation characterises many women's livelihoods in African countries, thus presenting contextual challenges to the fulfilment of young women's flashy lifestyle goals. The preceding view is similarly shared by Hawkins et al. (2009: 170) who maintains that young women's aspirations often occur within wider social, cultural and economic environments reinforced by factors such as gender-based inequality that frame the background against which the aspirations are imagined. It is within the preceding understanding that the next section explores the young women's agencies towards the fulfilment of their goals.

Agency is broadly defined as meaningful socio-economic action in which young women engage daily to meet their lifestyle goals Salo (2009). These economic actions are framed within day-to-day mechanisms such as hustling (ukuphanta/ukuphanda/making a plan) to reach financial goals Salo (2009: 11). Hustling denotes economic actions often devised within a broad range of progressively implemented strategies such as studying, employment and/or lack thereof. This view suggests that young women's agencies should be recognised as multifaceted, a characterisation which is dependent on the women's lifestyle goals (Berger, 2010; Madyibhi, 2017; Soper, 2009 and Zhan and He ,2011). These lifestyle goals are driven by desires for better lives that carry social meanings of affluence rather than the bare lives that tend to characterise the township space.

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The above discussion suggests that agency should be recognised as interconnected to the women's goals. Thus, sharing an understanding of agency similar to that of scholars such as Tuval-Mashiach et al. (2019: 2) and Willan et al. (2020: 2) who define agency as women's ability to identify their own goals and to act upon them. A perspective that suggests that agency begins with women being able to set their individual goals and extends to how they follow through with socio-economic actions to realise the goals. The agentic actions that young women take to achieve their desired goals occur in gendered social spaces in which social norms tend to influence individual behaviour in ways that impact women's realities (Diraditsile and Ontetse, 2017). The view suggests that in addition to recognising the connection between goals and agentic actions is a need to understand that women's goals and agentic actions are influenced by the environment in which they are imagined (Tuval-

Mashiach et al., 2019: 2). This environment is often a gendered socio-economic setting shaping young women's experiences quite distinctly, and in more complicated ways than their male counterparts, due to the patriarchal domination of women that exist in social structures. This is a view that indicates that young women's economic instrumental actions cannot be understood outside of the context in which they are negotiated. With the above discussion in mind, the following section examines the young women's agencies.

2.3.3 Negotiating economic realities towards meeting lifestyle goals

Xulu-Gama (2017) maintains that wage labour is still the core livelihood strategy for women in townships. Therefore, both permanent and casual employment, although unstable and vulnerable, as well as precarious, plays a vital role in the lives of young women within these localities. Many young women work in low-paying jobs as cashiers, hairdressers, cleaners and domestic workers, among other jobs. These are occupations whose salaries they tend to complement with grants such as old age, state pension and child support (Xulu-Gama, 2017). Other young women are still attending school and therefore dependent on their household heads for provisions. The above argument is supported by scholars such as Wood and Jewkes (1998) whose studies suggest that the South African grant system continues to be recognised as the single most relied upon anti-poverty tool deployed after 1994 with approximately 17 million recipients, 11 million of whom are younger than 18. According to the results of their studies, although these grants are intended for specific groups of people, in many households within peri-urban spaces they are relied upon to provide for the needs of all household members (Xulu-Gama, 2017).

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Notwithstanding the engagement of many township women in various mostly low-paying jobs, most young women in townships are economically dependent on the heads of their household as a result of unemployment. Unemployment is gendered; hence, women aged 15–34 years are the most vulnerable to unemployment, with roughly 44% of women compared to 36% of men unemployed in the first quarter of 2019 Stats SA (2019). Of the unemployed youth, approximately 56% had education levels below matric level, roughly 34% had matric, an estimate of 3% were graduates. In comparison, roughly 7% had other post-matric qualifications as their highest level of education. Many of the unemployed youth are located in Mpumalanga (roughly 32%), Free State (roughly 33%) and Eastern Cape (roughly 36%). It is therefore within this lack of economic activity among youth that scholars such as Diaz (2018), Mosoetsa (2011) and Swartz et al. (2016) argue South African townships have become spaces in which alcohol, drug abuse, crime as well as a sexual

economy are rife. According to these scholars, sexual economy, as well as illegal shebeens, are some of the examples of hidden livelihoods emerging in response to poverty within townships spaces thus serving as some of the ways in which township women earn their living.

The above view suggests that many young women in townships have the basic resources they need for survival met within their households, such as food, shelter, and clothing. However, due to the socio-economic limitations that constrain these young women, alternative economic engagements appear to be necessary to access material belongings most desirable to them (Howell and Vincent, 2014; Leclerc-Madlala, 2004; Mampane, 2018 and Wojcicki, 2002a). Within this context of meeting their material desires many young women may draw from transactional sexual relationships; this being, as noted by scholars, one of the most commonly employed agencies among young women (Howell and Vincent, 2014; Leclerc-Madlala, 2004; Mampane, 2018; Moodley and Ebrahim, 2019; Wojcicki 2002a and Zembe et al., 2013).

Transactional sex, therefore, involves a reciprocal relationship founded on the mutual sharing of sex (pleasure), gifts and money (Moodley and Ebrahim, 2019; Wojcicki, 2002a). Drawing on transactional sexual relationships is often justified through commonly used slogans such as ‘secure the bag’, ‘milk the cow’, ‘love does not pay the bills’ and ‘it’s better to cry in a mansion than to laugh in a shack’ that are used give more meaning to this form of economic activity in which young women get into intimate relationships with the intentions of accessing material (Howell and Vincent, 2014; Leclerc-Madlala, 2004; Masvawure, 2010; Mensah, 2020; Thobejane et al., 2017; Wojcicki, 2002a and Zembe et al., 2013). This suggests that women’s agency through which they draw on intimate relationships to meet their lifestyle goals is negotiated within wider social, economic and cultural factors in which gender-based inequality is apparent in how more young women are economically inactive. Gendered economic activity interplays with patriarchal notions through which men are constructed as providers, thus reinforcing the gendered dependency through transactional agencies framed within the commodification of the female body (Mensah, 2020).

It is important to note that transactional sex never merely involves straightforward exchanges in which women give men sex and men give women money (Masvawure, 2010). This is partly due to the framing of this exchange within an intimate relationship construct. This is an outlining that subsequently renders transactional relationships different from the form of prostitution that occurs outside of an intimate relationship, therefore, entailing an exchange

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of sex for money (Howell and Vincent, 2014; Leclerc-Madlala, 2004 and Wojcicki, 2002a). Transactional relationships also tend to occur within a context of concurrent partners in which young women differentiate their main partner from their transactional partner(s) (Howell and Vincent, 2014; Leclerc-Madlala, 2004; Mensah, 2020; Moodley and Ebrahim, 2019; Masvawure, 2010 and Wojcicki, 2002a).

The conspicuous consumption trend is captured by the increase of the blesser and slay queen relationship become predominant among young women. A blesser refers to relatively rich men who spend money buying expensive gifts and taking young women with them on local and international holidays with the most common destination being Dubai (Mgwili, 2016; Moodley and Ebrahim, 2019 and Ngobeni, 2016). A slay queen refers to young women who use their beauty to draw rich usually older men's attention, thereby dressing in enticing ways, often hanging around in places where they search for these men called blessers, entering into relationships with them. These usually older intimate partners are entered into intimate relationships without the women intending to marry them. These young women have other relationships with men their own age. They use blesser relationships to further economic and social status goals (Hawkins et al., 2009: 170).

For blessees and slay queens, transactional relationships provide an opportunity for them to access fashionable clothing, accessories and luxury goods. This is because fashionable images are loaded with important meanings among young women. Hence, the conspicuous consumption of material objects, especially clothes, has become an important identity marker for post-apartheid South African youth (Howell and Vincent, 2014; Leclerc-Madlala, 2004 and Zembe et al., 2013). This perspective is shared by Hawkins et al. (2009) and Zembe et al. (2013) who maintain that, through a strategy of extracting financial and material resources from men based on the power of their sexuality, young women construct a positive identity and esteem linked to perceptions of modernity and consumption and their ability to access consumer goods. One could, therefore, propose that the risky behavioural lifestyle choices made by young women within townships reflect the desire to act as successful middle-class consumers, thus creating a self-image that matches that of womanhood dominant within the media. A perspective shared by scholars such as Bongazana (2014) and O'Cass (2002) who suggest social influence has a significant role in young people's tendencies towards conspicuous consumption.

The above discussion is, therefore, indicative of how young women within townships forge alternative ways to fit into the predominant cultural setting. Through employing different

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agencies, these young women are finding ways to embody cultural images from which they are excluded, thereby framing themselves within notions of the middle class. Hence, Madyibi (2017: 34) maintains the desire to acquire and consume arises from a place of aspiration and wanting to feel important among young people, especially those who come from spaces that remained marginal politically and economically even after the transition to democracy. The agency of these young women, therefore, lies in their ability to shift in between multiple spatialised identities. These agentic acts are frowned upon, looked upon with fear and considered as immoral within their localities, accordingly judged in how they encourage behaviour contrary to the gendered expectations of the sexually restrained thus, problematising transactional sexual relationships rather than recognising them as forms of agency (Masvawure, 2010 and Mensah, 2020).

This above discussion suggests young women within the township spaces are torn between their material realities, lack of opportunities and the predominant images of affluence from which they are excluded as a result of their positioning within the under-resourced townships. Hence, these women are forging alternative mechanisms of being by performing appearances of affluence (Howell and Vincent, 2014; Leclerc-Madlala, 2004 and Mampane, 2018). These young women engage in agentic actions enabling them to temporarily participate in experiences linked to middle-class experiences, thereby giving themselves the impression of belonging to these spaces albeit temporarily. These mechanisms are indicative of their symbolic struggles with their spatial positioning and the material realities from which they are struggling to break free due to the lack of capital underlying their socio-economic realities. Hence, Madyibi (2017) and Salo (2009: 15) suggest the yearning for modern experiences among these young women is rooted in the material realities characterising the townships they inhabit; spaces which are not reflective of modernity. Hence, these young women opt for fictional accounts of gendered cosmopolitanism, which serve to resolve the apparent socio-economic contradictions they embody.

The agencies the women employ subsequently expose them to vulnerabilities through which their material conditions may worsen, thereby pushing them deeper into economic deprivation. Vulnerability is broadly defined as the potential risk that women may be open to as they attempt to negotiate their realities in ways that sometimes challenge the status quo, thus threatening the hierarchical order that benefits men over women (Howell and Vincent, 2014; Leclerc-Madlala, 2004; Masvawure, 2010; Mensah, 2020; Wojcicki, 2002a and Zembe et al., 2013). This means that women's vulnerability is a reflection of gendered reactions that

young women experience from men when their agencies are recognised as a threat to men's power and privilege.

This view points to the far-reaching impact of gender inequality underlying young women's proneness to various forms of vulnerability which may compromise their agentic economic actions. It is with this view in mind that this study recognises young women's agency as embedded within the structuring of the spatial environment within which they are produced. Consequently, it is proposed that it is the gender inequality across economic, employment, occupational and educational spatial institutions that inform young women's experiences of vulnerability. These vulnerabilities are underpinned by gender inequality that outlined the township environment with its economic limitations. This made the women's agencies necessary toward meeting their lifestyle goals, thus suggesting that women within township spaces exercise their agencies within multiple embeddedness as indicated in the discussion below.

2.3.4 Limitations of women's sexual agencies

Hawkins et al. (2009) maintain that transactional sexual agencies need to be examined through gender power relations underlying access to and control over resources, which in this case are materials versus the women's bodies and sexuality. A similar view is shared by Shefer and Strebel (2012), who suggest there are inherent inequalities in transactional sexual relationships due to the hegemonic masculinity that has control over resources. The concern over unequal power dynamics in transactional agencies is pronounced in a South African context where coercion and violence is a common feature in intimate relationships.

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It is therefore within the above context that scholars such as Bhana (2012), Moffett (2006), Wood (2005) and Wood, Lambert and Jewkes (2007) maintain that transactional sexual agencies are characterised by unequal power dynamics informed by the patriarchal nature of transactional sexual relationships in which men are framed as sources of resources and women as beneficiaries. Thus suggesting that transactional sexual agencies are outlined by the problematic standpoint that places men in an economic advantage as they control the material resources the young women seek through intimacy (Hunter, 2012). This form of intimacy is an agency through which the women rely on their bodies as bargaining tools, thus giving control for their bodies in exchange for material and financial benefits.

In the above-mentioned context, women's bargaining power tends to be limited to choosing their intimate power and often does not extend to defining the rules of sexual engagements

as indicated by the women's vulnerability to rape and unprotected sex. The latter are coerced and violent experiences, which subsequently expose the women to sexually transmitted infections and unplanned pregnancies, thus, entrapping the women into more vulnerabilities (Bhana, 2012; Moffett, 2006; Wood, 2005 and Wood et al., 2007). This view, similarly shared by Hawkins et al. (2009), Mensah (2020) and Shefer and Strebel (2012), that women's sexual experiences continue to be located within cultural expressions shaping them as subordinated objects of oppressive heterosexuality although presenting them as defining subjects of their sexual experiences through expressions of sexual agency and independence. A view also similarly shared by Hunter (2010) who maintains that by drawing on transactional sexual agencies, women in townships entangle themselves into the very fabric of masculinity through their own agency. Thus women, by operating through patriarchal structures rarely see themselves as victims, despite the vulnerabilities to which are exposed as they navigate these constraining structures.

Notwithstanding the vulnerabilities that women in transactional sexual relationships may be exposed to there is a need to recognise the agency in how young women who practice transactional sexual agencies situate themselves to exploit sexual relationships (Leclerc-Madlala, 2004; Mampane, 2018; Wojcicki, 2002a and Zembe et al., 2013). These women are, for example, able to extract materials that enable them the money and materials they want thus, giving themselves experiences of the middle-class lifestyle they desire. This means that through their sexual agencies, they locate themselves as beneficiaries of resources through notions such as 'side chick', which are used to reflect women's intimate location outside of married men's marriage. The women do not expect the men to leave their wives but instead expect to benefit from the men financially and materially through gifts and vacations, among other things (Stoebenau et al., 2016).

These women's agencies challenge patriarchal expectations through the deliberate engagement in intimate relationships without expecting marriage, thus exercising their agency in how they choose sexual independence (Masvawure, 2010). These women are, therefore not passive victims, but are agentic in their choices of transactional sexual agencies as well as the ways in which they navigate the agencies to minimise exposure to vulnerabilities. Hence Stoebenau et al. (2016) maintain that women in transactional sexual relationships express power and agency in how they understand and thus manipulate traditional gendered assumptions of intimate relationships in ways that provide them with their desired resources. The view proposes that even within settings that appear deeply

patriarchal, women are able to find spaces for female influence (Leclerc-Madlala, 2004; Stoebenau et al., 2016; Wojcicki, 2002a and Zembe et al., 2013).

2.4 Conclusion

As indicated in the above discussion, young women's lifestyle choices are tied to townships and the material conditions characterising townships through the shared aspirations these social spaces generate among the women. This means women's aspirations that form the background to their agencies are generated from a cultural setting that motivates a generation of similar aspirations while subsequently promoting reliance on similar agencies to meet the lifestyle goals. This cultural setting is outlined by an interplay of resource deprivation and patriarchy that outline the context in which women negotiate their agencies.

The above discussion, therefore, proposes that women's sexual agencies should be understood within a negotiation under coexisting experiences of deprivation, instrumentality and vulnerability. This deprivation reflects the women's position of insufficient resources from which many of them make their lifestyle choices. This deprivation means even though the women may have their survival needs met in their households, they still lack resources to meet their lifestyle goals hence the pressure to devise alternative agencies (Leclerc-Madlala, 2004 and Stoebenau et al., 2016). The economic deprivation coexists with instrumentality which denotes the women's willingness to imagine better lifestyles that sometimes contradict the common lifestyles reflected in their township environments.

Instrumentality is subsequently reflected by how the women partake in various forms of sometimes risky means even though they are aware of the potential risks involved thus exercising agency to attain their lifestyle goals (Leclerc-Madlala, 2004 and Stoebenau et al., 2016). Instrumentality is also reflected in the young women's use of their power to choose sexual partners, to choose their sexual image and how to use the image to draw the material benefits they want from men (Leclerc-Madlala, 2004 and Stoebenau et al., 2016). Economic actions the women devise alone or with other forms of social actions such as studying thus indicating navigation between experiences of economic dependence and independence depending on the contexts within which the range of mechanisms are drawn.

It is in exercising their instrumentality that the women are met with vulnerability in which they are exposed to violent masculinities that uses power to restrain them through emotional, physical and sexual abuse (Leclerc-Madlala, 2004 and Stoebenau et al., 2016). It is with this

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view in mind that this study recognises young women's agency as embedded within gendered townships realities in ways that present the agencies as both freeing and constraining. The agencies are freeing in how they enable the women to forge their own sexual experiences that may not conform to the traditional expectations. However, they are constraining in how the women are exposed to vulnerabilities occurring within intimate relationships. This proposes it is as a result of this embeddedness in multiple forms of domination that characterise the townships that the young women's agencies tend to situate the women within fluctuating experiences of advantage and disadvantage.

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CHAPTER 3 TOWARDS A THEORETICAL CONCEPTUALISATION OF YOUNG WOMEN'S TOWNSHIP REALITIES

3.1 Introduction

The following chapter provides a theoretical conceptualisation of the realities of young women in township spaces. The analysis draws from intersectional theorists Crenshaw (1989) and Collins (1990), whose viewpoint is significant in how it enables an examination of reality cognizant of the far-reaching impact caused by interlocking structuring structures that shape the women's localities in which their realities are negotiated. Intersectionality, therefore, is fitting for the study because it recognises the complexity underlying the young women's heterogeneous experiences as produced by the multiple simultaneous setting of the women within race, class, gender and age categories that provide them with varying experiences of advantage and disadvantage. Thus, grounding women's realities within the complex structuring that underpins the constructions of the environments in which their realities are negotiated.

Drawing from intersectionality makes it vital to explore the structuring of the locality in which women's realities are negotiated, the aim of which is to understand how the structuring of the place serves as the background against which the women's aspirations and economic actions are imagined. Within this context, the study draws from Bourdieu's (1985; 1989; 1990; 1993) perspective on cultural production, which enables an understanding of townships as social, economic and political fields of cultural interaction. Bourdieu's (1985; 1989; 1990; 1993) perspective is therefore drawn from in how it provides an understanding of how the distribution of resources in townships underlies the women's intersectional experiences. Bourdieu (1985; 1989; 1990; 1993) is subsequently drawn from through his notion of habitus, which enables an examination of how young women make sense of their locations in ways that shape their economic actions.

With the above introduction in mind, the following discussion presents the main concepts such as intersectionality, fields, capital, habitus used to theorise young women's realities. The discussion is followed by an analysis of young women's realities which is aimed at unearthing how the varying experiences that form the background to women's experiences are shaped by multiple structuring characterising the women's backgrounds. The discussion thus presents women's realities as continuously negotiated within varying experiences of advantage and disadvantage.

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3.2 Examining how young women negotiate realities against an intersectional background

The following discussion provides key perspectives and concepts through which young women's township realities are examined. This study draws from a combination of classical and contemporary theorists in order to provide an analysis of young women's experiences. The aim of this is to capture the complexity of the young women's realities as these occur in environments shaped historically and whose historical meaning is constantly negotiated. It is, therefore, with this understanding of the women's reality as fluid and contextually produced that the following concepts are drawn from to interpret the complex realities.

3.2.1 Theory mapping

Intersectionality reflects an understanding of reality as informed by power differentials based on the arrangement of socio-economic categories that are multiple, multiplicative and inseparable (Anthias, 2012; Brah and Phoenix, 2004; Crenshaw, 1989; Collins, 1990 and Hulko, 2009). This means women's township experiences are a reflection of the dynamics of power that is socially produced by their location through coexisting categories such as race, class, gender and age that sometimes generate experiences of belonging and not-belonging, advantage and disadvantage, within which the women's experiences occur (Anthias, 2012; Brah and Phoenix, 2004; Crenshaw, 1989; Collins, 1990 and Hulko, 2009). It is, therefore, with an understanding of reality as shaped in intersectional structured locations that this study employs the notion of intersectionality. The intention of which is to unearth the main categories underlying the environments in which township women negotiate their realities.

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Fields refer to recognition of townships as equipped with contextual rules of engagement (explicit and implicit) through which the resources within these settings are accessed (Bourdieu 1985; 1989; 1990; 1993). This notion is drawn from in how it recognises the townships as unique in how they are constructed historically through political, social, economic and cultural distributions of resources as reflected by their cultural institutions (Bourdieu, 1985; 1990; 1993; Faragó, 2016; Lefebvre, 1991 and Massey, 1994). Additionally, these sites are recognised as unique in how its inhabitants generate contextual cultures that define rules of engagement, that may sometimes contradict the rules informing their historical construction. The context-specific rules may, therefore, endow women within townships with unique township specific perspectives, thus shaping their outlooks in different ways compared to outlooks of young women outside townships (Bourdieu, 1985;

1990; 1993). The rules of engagement are recognised in how they are shaped by the structuring of the township space as well as by how inhabitants within townships interpret them as indicated by their actions, which may conform to or be dismissive of the township cultures.

Capitals refer to the various resources distributed within townships. These resources range from institutions, an example of which is schools, to symbolic resources such as fashionable wear, weaves, and accessories that signal what young women regard as markers of social status. This understanding of capital draws from Bourdieu (1985; 1989; 1990; 1993) who proposes capital is socially produced hence the need to understand resources within their contextual meanings. Capital in this study is therefore recognised as economic (e.g. money), social (e.g. relationships), cultural (e.g. educational institutions) and symbolic (e.g. fashionable clothing) the value of which depends on the understanding of the young women and social agents within their locations (Bourdieu, 1985; 1989; 1990; 1993). This notion is drawn from in how it provides an understanding of the women's aspirations against which their economic agencies are negotiated.

Habitus describes the socialised mindset of the township women as reflected by their thinking, feeling and acting, which generate their aspirations as well as economic actions (Bourdieu, 1985; 1989; 1990; 1993). The women's habitus is therefore recognised as a generative system that complies to and/or defines the township expectations as noted by how women aspire to common trends thereby acting in ways that conform with the rules of township engagement even to a point where these ensure the reproduction of societal inequalities (Bourdieu, 1985; 1990; 1993). This generative system is visible through how it shapes the way people carry themselves, the things they invest their time and resources in as well as their perceptions of what is right and wrong.

With the above view in mind, the following section examines young women's realities through intersectionality by drawing from classical theorists such as Crenshaw (1989) and Collins (1990) as well as contemporary theorists. The discussion provides an understanding of how structuring categories inform women's experiences by shaping the environment within which women navigate when negotiating their lifestyle goals. This means that women's realities are examined in how they are produced through the structural make-up of the townships in which they are located thus presenting an understanding of the women's actions as shaped within the broader societal scale (Houssay-Holzschuch and Teppo, 2009; Manderscheid, 2009; Segalo, 2015 and Smith, 2018). This outlook is important as it goes

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beyond understanding women's realities as produced through women's choices thus recognising the reality as a product of a dialectal engagement between the young women's subjective actions and the young women's settings (Berger and Luckmann, 1966). This view recognises women as active agents who participate in the construction of their realities.

3.2.2 Towards an intersectional analysis

Crenshaw (1989) employs the analogy of multiple conjoining street intersections to characterise how multiple systems of domination intersect in complex and sometimes contradictory ways, shaping the exercise of power within which young women's realities are negotiated. Her analogy proposes that social, economic, cultural and political fields ought to be recognised as conjoining highways where racial, gendered, class and age streets overlap forming the setting in which women's realities are negotiated. As Crenshaw (1989) suggests, this intersection becomes visible through the macro policies that shape the construction of socio-economic institutions, through the functioning of these institutions and through the arranging of societal members within the locations where realities are constantly negotiated.

This perspective suggests that not only do places occupied by young women carry a socio-economic meaning they also convey historical, political, racial, gendered, cultural meanings (Nkooe, 2018: 26 and Segalo, 2015). These meanings are interpreted through the cultural, social and economic rules upon which they are constructed as symbolic spaces and based on which they function as culture propagating institutions. Segalo's (2015: 70) articulation of social divisions within the context of power relations and the state is central in locating young women's realities within fields of cultural production within which young women's aspirations are both imagined and negotiated. Hence, Collins (1990) suggests that intersectional connotations are embedded in the ideologies that govern fields of cultural production. It is because these fields, which by definition, are loaded with multiple and often racialised class-based gendered meanings, underpin young women's complex realities.

As indicated in the above discussion, intersectional experiences of diverse forms of inequality often characterise young women's realities in townships (Anthias, 2012; Brah and Phoenix, 2004; Crenshaw, 1989; Collins, 1990 and Hulko, 2009). These heterogeneous experiences of unequal access to resources visible at both the institutional and community level have their roots deeply planted at the macro level where rules of social, economic and cultural engagement are produced. It is for this reason that experiences of discrimination cannot simply be examined as individual experiences that speak to subjective experiences of

oppression but should be traced back to the conceptualisation of cultural fields, where some of the individual's economic actions gain their meaning and significance (Anthias, 2012; Brah and Phoenix, 2004; Crenshaw, 1989; Collins, 1990 and Hulko, 2009). It is with this view in mind that intersectionality gains its importance as it enables an understanding of how the economic, cultural, political and social systems of domination are related to overlapping oppressive structuring systems such as class, race, gender and age that underlie fields of cultural production.

Intersectionality recognises fields in how they are informed by intertwined and mutually constitutive building blocks whose multifaceted structuring is transferred to young women through socialisation which is done in ways that present cultural structurings as natural rather than socially constructed (Segalo, 2015). In doing so, intersectionality exposes how power, hierarchy and inequalities that underpin the heterogeneous realities of women in township spaces are informed by the structuring of the women's environment (Segalo, 2015). Hence, through the matrix of domination, Collins (1990) reflects how structuring structures are deeply rooted in simultaneously multiplicative forms of dominations that underlie social order. Collins (1990) suggests that these forms of domination that structure the predominant fields, are filtered down to social institutions, and they filter through to societal members. It is within this framework of understanding that Collins (1990) proposes that social institutions such as schools and churches among other formal organisations are founded upon the very oppressive ideologies that serve to socialise young women in ways that normalise and reproduce oppressive positioning rather than challenge the status quo.

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Collins's (1990) recognition of inequalities as rooted within fields of cultural production complements that of Crenshaw (1989) who employs the notion of intersectionality to unearth how the complex interplay of class, race, gender and age structures the legal system in ways that favour or discriminate women depending on the juncture of these structuring categories. Crenshaw's (1989) analysis proves that the legal system is not objective, but one informed by socially constructed philosophies, which in themselves are discriminative. Consequently, the legal institution tends to normalise and reproduce oppressive standpoints rather than challenge the status quo. Her viewpoint of the legal system is indicative of how cultural institutions, such as the education and family system, are founded upon prejudiced rules informing socio-economic experiences of inclusion and exclusion underlying young women's economic actions. These rules are, therefore, unable to eliminate the inequalities underlying young women's experiences because of the embeddedness of structural inequality

within the historical construction of the institutions. Hence, the rules of engagement within these societal systems serve to normalise and perpetuate the varying experiences of intersectional discrimination and its subordinating experiences within which women's lifestyles are framed (Collins, 1990 and Crenshaw, 1989). This means the persistence of socio-economic inequality that young women experience in their townships should be understood in how it is protected by the intersectional make-up of the locations through social, economic, political and cultural systems often disguised as means to improve their realities. These are the structured structuring policies and cultural practices that are often blind to the complexities shaping women's experiences; hence despite their existence, women continue to negotiate their realities from a disadvantaged structured socio-economic position (Collins, 1990 and Crenshaw, 1989).

The preceding viewpoint proposes that cultural systems are not neutral but are socially constructed to promote the interests of the dominant to the disadvantage of the dominated (Bourdieu, 1985; 1990; 1993). These are socio-economic, cultural constructions in the ways they shape the reproduction of inequality as informed by women's positioning within the intersections of class, race, gender and age. By referring to these as a cultural construction, the outlook recognises these constructions in how they shape the production of generative habits that tend to be normalised, thereby shaping the reproduction of action.

Although age is not always referred to as one of the structuring structures by theorists in their discussions of intersectionality, this structuring structure is significant in how it interacts with other structuring structures such as class, race and gender thereby shaping the lived experiences of women in varying ways. These varying ways are informed by one's positioning within these structures and in their interaction. Age, for example, is significant in how it positions young women within the decision-making process, thereby framing who is legitimately able to make choices regarded as rational. It is within this setting that different societies distinguish between children, youth and adults. Therefore, Mahery and Proudlock (2011: 6) reveal that according to the Bill of Rights and the Children's Act 38 of 2005 Section 1, children are defined as all people under the age of 18 years. This means that women under the age of 18 years are prohibited from engaging in various activities such as exercising their own valid will, consuming alcohol and other related substances and engaging in sex. Hence, according to law, it is a criminal offence for a person to have sex with a child under the age of 16 even if that child consented. The exception to this being the case where the child deceived one into believing that they are above the age of 16 years. This means that age is

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aligned to certain social experiences that occur as a result of cultural meanings linked to this structuring category.

The experiences linked to age are shaped by how this category intersects with other structuring structures such as class, race and gender. Hence, age is vital in understanding notions of intersectionality. It is within this viewpoint that this study recognises the importance of the social construction of age in how it interacts with class, race and gender, thereby outlining the context within which township women construct their realities.

The recognition of the multifaceted nature of inequality and its location within the socially constructed cultural categories of domination can be traced back to theorists, such as Beal, (1969) and King (1988). These theorists, through notions such as double and multiple jeopardy, reflected how the coexistence of race, sexism and capitalism produced the unique social positioning of societal members within the socio-economic public space. Beal (1969), in her discussions, emphasises how capitalism as an economic system of domination influenced social constructions of racism and sexism in ways that produced contradicting oppressive work experiences. Beal (1969) urged societal members to take note of the oppressive system of capitalism, emphasising it as the predominant system that shaped the racialised, unequal sexist distribution of socio-economic resources. King (1988) subsequently expanded on the notion of double jeopardy, arguing that it is not only that the simultaneous presence of racism and sexism that is problematising social reality. It is also how these structures serve as structuring structures of multiplicative oppression reflecting how racism, sexism and classism, positions women within disadvantaged situations in all socio-economic institutions. The recognition of multiple systems of domination informed the coining of the notion of triple jeopardy.

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The notion of double, triple and subsequently multiple jeopardy laid an important foundation as it reflected inequality as grounded in the ideological conceptions; an example of which is how being resilient became synonymous with the meaning of black womanhood through the prevalent experiences of encouraging black women to endure multiple forms of discrimination (Beal, 1969 and King, 1988). These jeopardies were filtered down through policies upon which norms, values and cultures within these social institutions were founded. The most important contribution by the notion of jeopardies was in problematising the constitution of power within macrostructures. These theorists drew attention to how the policies of institutional construction shape the social construction of reality. Furthermore, they highlighted how these policies tend to be received, internalised and engaged with as if

they are objective; a process which served to mask the role played by socio-economic institutions in the reproduction of socio-economic inequality within various social spaces.

The notions of double, triple and subsequently, multiple realities revealed that socio-economic inequality is a social formation that is embedded within fields of cultural, economic, political and social power and should be understood as such. By locating the source of inequality at a structural level, these theorists made it possible to examine both the social construction of inequality as well as how it is normalised within social spaces rather than reducing it to a subjective problem that should be challenged at a personal level. It is the above-mentioned understanding that shaped Crenshaw's (1989) argument; the problem of socio-economic exclusion cannot be solved merely by including women within socio-economic structures that are already established because they were not constructed to recognise the intersectional nature of women's socio-economic inequalities. This is an argument capturing the fact that issues of inclusion and exclusion are indicative of the social construction of reality as a symbolic source of power and domination. It is therefore structured in ways perpetuating the continuation of socio-economic inequalities.

It is within the above-mentioned perspective that theorists such as Brah and Phoenix (2004), maintain that intersectionality signifies the complex, irreducible varied and variable impact that ensues when multiple axes of differentiation and domination intersect in historically specific contexts. Multiple systems of domination are simultaneously constructed in a specific historical context within which their meanings are shaped. While carrying their socially constructed historical structurings, these structured systems transform with time thus adapting to the changing social, economic, political and cultural environment without necessarily forgoing their historical discriminative structuring (Christie, 2012 Faragó, 2016; Lefebvre, 1991; Massey, 1994; Nkooe, 2018; Schmid, 2008 and Segalo, 2015).

Class, race, gender and age can be broadly defined as historically socially constructed socio-economic structuring systems through which young women are situated into hierarchies based on their situation within these structuring categories (Weber, 1998). The fact that these positioning categories are socially constructed within a historical apartheid context in which they gained both their meaning and significance indicate their meanings vary. Subsequently, how they shape socio-economic experiences are based on the context within which they were constructed (Weber, 1998). However, because reality changes, the historical meaning these structuring structures they carry, continue to gain new meaning as societies negotiate their realities in ways that question, challenge and attempt to go beyond the historical meanings

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within which the categorise were produced. These engagements often lead to structuring structures gaining new meanings without them necessarily losing their historical structuring meaning; hence, they continue to coexist in ways that perpetuate the status quo (Hulko, 2009). Therefore, despite the socio-economic changes that occur as young women negotiate their realities, their negotiated realities continue to be shaped by experiences of class, race, gender and age that form the background to the women's experiences of privilege and disadvantage. These are the intersectional experiences in which class, race, gender and age underlie the women's practices of inclusion and exclusion.

Class refers to the socio-economic process through which people are located within social spaces in terms of the similarities resulting from their shared socio-economical privilege or disadvantage (Weber, 1998). Race is indicative of how physical traits such as skin colour are socially constructed and how their meanings are integrated into socio-economic processes informing the allocation of resources within societies and through which societal institution's functioning is based. Gender is indicative of how biological traits linked to sex are socially constructed and how their meanings are integrated into the structuring structure of societal institutions thereby informing experiences of inclusion and exclusion according to which socio-economic power is accessed (Weber, 1998). Age denotes how chronological age is shaped by social norms attached to the various age groups. These social norms carry expectations of how people within varying age groups are expected to behave as well as what they are entitled to access by virtue of belonging to that specific age group. Since these norms are socially constructed, they vary from culture to culture.

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The broadly defined structuring systems have their unique socially produced origins however they function together, thereby reinforcing each other and reinforcing the experiences of privilege and or disadvantage depending on the setting of the social agent within the social space. Therefore, it is important to recognise their uniqueness as structuring categories as well as the intersectional way in which they operate as structured structuring structures. As maintained by theorists such as Weber (1998), people's lived experiences have never fitted neatly into ideological boundaries because lives are far more complex and far-reaching. Intersectionality seeks to capture this complexity by recognising the intertwining of these structuring processes and the complex ways in which these entangled, and mutually dependent, structures shape the context within which realities are constructed. The emphasis on the value of circumstance means that this study recognises these structuring categories as never fixed and that their meanings vary through historical periods and across socio-

economic borders. Hence, these categories are employed within this study in their broad meanings with the awareness that their true meanings cannot be fully captured in how they shape the lived experiences of societal agents.

The above discussion outlines that spatial experiences of class, race, gender and age are not based on the experiences linked to these categories as personal identity categories but rather as social hierarchies shaping the categories as linked to status, power and for instance, access to resources. These experiences should be examined as an indication of how capitalism as an economic ideology uses the principles and practices of classism, racism, genderism and ageism in its construction of policies that in turn, reinforce cultural inequality. It further proposes that in examining capitalism in its relation to these principles and practices, there should be an awareness that these systems of power are interrelated and also that they intersect in the way in which they influence capitalism. This perspective provides unique understandings of the complex ways in which young women are located within social spaces and how social spaces are constructed through othering processes. Scholars such as Anthias (2012), suggest that physical relations of hierarchy exist as outcomes of the operational power reinforced by social categories that neutralise, collectivise and essentialise social relations and unequal resource allocation. The above statement is indicative of how within the social production of localities that form the environment in which lifestyles are imagined, boundary- and hierarchy-making processes are constructed. These constructions serve as ways to situate people over time and place, therefore manifesting themselves as categories of action in specific contexts.

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Intersectionality, as a framework, breaks down the economic interests by providing an understanding of whose economic interests are served through these social constructions. Intersectionality, therefore, clarifies what establishes young women's standing within this township environment, arguing women are arranged in these locations through intersections of class, race, gender and age. This ordering occurs within the fields of power where these structuring structures intersect in shaping the policies and practices through which social institutions are founded. Furthermore, this positioning is historic and can be traced back to the social construction of the structuring structures as heteronomous structuring categories as well as intersecting structuring structures. This view makes it important to examine how inequalities are normalised, thus presenting it in ways that make them internalised as normal and subsequently perpetuated through cultural (habitual) interactions. It is with this view in mind that the following discussion examined Bourdieu's (1985; 1989; 1990; 1993) notion of

cultural production thus complementing it with the preceding intersectional perspective and using these as lenses through which to make sense of the realities of township women.

3.3 Complementing intersectionality with post-structural theoretical viewpoints

This study complements intersectionality with Bourdieu's (1985; 1989; 1990; 1993) theoretical approach to the field of cultural production. It does this by highlighting the embeddedness of women's inequality experiences within the intersectional structures through which inequality is produced as reflected by the distribution of cultural resources within localities. Bourdieu (1993) suggests it is within fields of cultural production where power is constituted and used in producing realities in ways that present them as natural, thereby masking the underlying structuring processes. Hence, Bourdieu (1985; 1989; 1990; 1993) maintains that sites in which predominant cultures are constructed and transferred to women inform the experiences of women who inhabit similar places in ways that encourage development of similar dispositions and interests, thus reproducing practices that are in themselves similar and therefore appear as natural. Consequently, women who inhabit these places may produce comparable lived experiences that inform the basis upon which they may establish their context-based communal relations. These relations may end up producing local practices and philosophies, thereby reproducing more shared experiences upon which communities are reinforced. Therefore, Bourdieu (1993) suggests the taken for granted aspects of reality that appear as common sense are indicative of how young women have internalised social structures. A consequence of which is the way social agents accept and perceive social spaces and relations within these spaces as natural. Hence Bourdieu examined places, not as physical entities but rather contexts of cultural reproduction.

Bourdieu (1985; 1989; 1990; 1993) further maintains that localities are defined by the distinction that constitutes them. Hence within townships, there are context-specific interpretations of which resources are valued based on the cultural meanings shared within these spaces which serve to distinguish townships from other locations. This is why it is important to recognise multiple meanings of townships in how they influence young women's understanding of what is valued and what is not, thus performing as fields of cultural production in how they endow their inhabitants with contextual rules of economic engagement. These lived practices are reflected by the women's access to resources in the form of cultural, social and economic and symbolic capital which are fundamental in shaping their lived experiences in their environments. Therefore, according to Bourdieu (1993), there is a complex relationship between townships as cultural spaces and townships as physical

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localities. This relationship is underpinned by power dynamics that inform the distribution of capital within these social spaces.

Capital, as defined by Bourdieu (1985), refers to accumulated labour in its materialised form, or its incorporated embodied form. Bourdieu (1985) introduced cultural, social, symbolic and economic capital, which influence the construction and functioning of relations within social spaces. According to him, cultural capital refers to high-status cultural signals that are available in an objectified, institutionalised and embodied state. Symbolic capital refers to the status symbols that women recognise because of their shared social meaning within their social spaces (Bourdieu, 1985; 1989; 1990; 1993). Social capital refers to the aggregate of the cultural or potential resources linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition. This entails the benefits that women can draw on as a result of membership in various networks, whether friendships, neighbourhoods of more formalised institutions as well as an added benefit such as the favours that people can call upon from those with whom they share group membership. The reproduction of social capital requires an accumulative effort of sociability; a nonstop series of exchanges in which recognition is endlessly affirmed and reaffirmed (Bourdieu, 1985). Whereas, economic capital can be defined as the economic resources that can immediately and directly be converted into money.

Bourdieu's (1985) introduction of cultural, social, symbolic and economic capital enables an even more in-depth understanding of the background within which young women's aspirations are framed by unearthing how contextual interpretations of what is important underlie women's aspirations. This argument is also significant in how it renders the women's experience of privilege and under-privilege fluid rather than static and therefore dependent on the meaning of resources that women seek access to as they navigate through the townships, switching between experiences of privilege and under-privilege (Bourdieu, 1985).

With the above view in mind, this study proposes that an investigation of how fields of cultural production work in shaping young women's realities should be examined in how these fields use intersectional societal institutions to shape the way common aspirations are generated among women who share common spaces. This means that young women's realities should not be understood as constructed through perceptions and standpoints, which are so deep-rooted in the women that they appear as natural, thus interpreted as common sense. Bourdieu (1985; 1989; 1990; 1993) proposes this common sense is indicative of how

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deep-seated cultural inscriptions are. In doing so, he revealed young women tend to engage in acts without any planning, producing realities that reinforce their lived experiences of exclusion and inclusion in ways that appear as though they are personal choices and preferences subject to free will but which are in fact, subtle indications of structural bedrocks (Bourdieu, 1985; 1989; 1990; 1993). His approach is significant as it creates a link between the physical manifestation of women's realities and the thinking patterns that generate the women's economic actions that in turn, produce these shared realities (Bourdieu, 1993).

Bourdieu's (1985; 1989; 1990; 1993) perspective captures how structuring structures sometimes limit women's actions and at other times, enable women the space to exercise their choices thus creating a perception that women have power even though none of the power completely enables them to deconstruct the constraining structuring structures underlying their inequalities. This means that women's choices are subject to restraints shaping the context within which they are made. Hence no women may fully access power to change the status quo but can do so just enough to negotiate agencies that continue to be accessed within limitations thus reminding them of the structural boundaries that frame their locations (Bourdieu, 1985; 1989; 1990; 1993).

As suggested by Bourdieu (1985; 1989; 1990; 1993), people do not simply produce reality, but they interact with structuring structures that shape their background. This perspective is supported by Beames and Telford (2013), who maintain that individuals unconsciously adopt cultural patterns and norms that surround them. Notions of what is right and appropriate therefore become ingrained, instinctive patterns of thought and behaviour and these notions influence future actions in ways that shape the production of reality, guiding the positioning of women within those socio-economic experiences. Complementing intersectionality with Bourdieu's notion of cultural production, therefore, means recognising the complexity through which young women's realities and social positioning is produced and reproduced through the women's economic undertakings. The economic undertakings are shaped by the women's structuring, hence the need to unearth the process through which young women's cultural patterns are internalised and externalised through their economic actions.

With the above discussion in mind, using the notion of socialisation, the following discussion proposes that young women adopt the co-constituted perspectives that shape the social, economic and cultural ways in which they engage with their intersectional environments. The discussion is important because it maintains that it is through the habitus that one can observe how these women have grasped their background socio-economic conditions. Thus,

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the habitus produces visible forms of actions, as it shapes lifestyle choices, socio-economic mechanisms employed as well as notions of agency. The notion of the habitus is, therefore examined as it relates to the women's social action, thereby framing the aspirations as well as mechanisms employed in fulfilling these aspirations.

3.3.1 The habitus

Habitus, as presented by Bourdieu (1985; 1989; 1990; 1993), refers to a system of durable, transportable dispositions; structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures. It encompasses principles that generate and organise practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing conscious aiming at the end. Habitus, reflected by Bourdieu's (1985; 1989; 1990; 1993) conceptualisation refers to the subjective deeply ingrained processes through which young women's aspirations, perspectives and approaches to life are informed. It is how women understand and respond to their experiences as informed by the lessons they learnt within the social contexts in which they were socialised. The habitus is therefore reflective of the influence of the women's personal past experiences as well as the resources and their relationship to the resources characterising the context within which history and past experiences were generated. Hill and Lai (2016) maintain that the habitus describes the socialised body where the social is in the body as indicated by one's way of thinking, feeling and acting, which generate ones feel for the game as well one's competencies, all of which have relevance to one's choices.

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Socialisation presents an important link to an understanding of the habitus in both its suggestion of how women are produced and how they function as shaped by this process. It unearths how societal institutions socialise the women in ways that lead to the production of temperaments shaping how the women feel at home in certain experiences and not in others. Understanding the socialisation process uncovers the process through which the women consistently make choices that reproduce the at-home feeling thereby repositioning themselves within familiar conditions that tend to feel right and may resonate with their gut feeling of fitting in (Bourdieu, 1985; 1989; 1990; 1993). This understanding also encompasses how the women are engendered in ways that promote the reproduction of social inequalities without their recognition by making decisions that present themselves as choices, yet they are enactments of their social positioning as shaped by the structuring process (Bourdieu, 1985; 1989; 1990; 1993). This means that through the habitus, which is a system of long-lasting and transportable dispositions, institutions exert control over young women in ways that shape rational choices which present themselves as tastes and preferences.

McNay (1999), referring to the habitus, maintains it is a process of corporeal inculcation of power domination upon the body and its dispositions, a process exercised upon the social agent through his or her complicity. The habitus as a generative system, once successfully socialised, complies with the specific institutional requirements thereby acting in ways that comply with the rules of the institution even to the point where these ensure the reproduction of societal inequalities (Bourdieu, 1985; 1989; 1990; 1993). This generative system is visible through how it shapes the way women tend to carry themselves in cultural-specific ways, the things in which they invest their time and resources as well as their perceptions of what is right and wrong. What McNay (1999) suggests is that when women are socialised, they internalise the socio-economic inequalities that characterise the environments within which they are socialised. This, in turn, serves to produce a class-based habitus shaping the women's aspirations, perspectives, approaches to life and responses to situations in class-based terms. This ensures they are locked within class-based tastes according to which their class positions may be reproduced.

The above suggestion is shared by Dumais (2006), who maintains the habitus as a set of dispositions based on social class tends to reproduce inequalities that tend to lock young women within the same class as their parents. This is because young women in privileged positions tend to act in ways that secure their privilege, passing this to their offspring through investments in forms of appropriate cultural capital. Those who are poor may also act in ways that are shaped by their class positions as well as lack of cultural capital that tends to characterise this social class. These differences are more apparent in how parents invest in the education of young women as well as how young women's perceptions about education encourage social actions that serve to reposition them within specific cultural experiences (Bourdieu, 1985; 1989; 1990; 1993). Women's socio-economic choices are, therefore, reflective of the individual's understanding of their position within society. These choices serve as self-fulfilling prophecies in how they are inclined to position individuals within the same positions within which they were cultivated.

This perspective is vital in laying the foundation to understand how contextual realities are reproduced through social action as it provides a link between social action and the reproduction of social inequality through the habitus. As maintained by Bourdieu (1985; 1989; 1990; 1993), social action lies with the habitus in how the habitus produces practices that are impulsive, indicative of common-sense knowledge, and therefore disguised as expressions of choices and enactment of freedom. Through the notion of habitus, Bourdieu

(1993) reflects how the habitus as a structured structure serves as a structuring structure through how it generates tastes, values, perceptions and modes of reasoning, all of which influence behaviours in ways that contribute to social positioning. It further locates these within a dialectic relationship with the fields of cultural production as well as the societal institutions through which power is transmitted in social spaces through how social institutions reinforce feelings of inclusion and exclusion through their policies that govern cultural conduct in these institutions.

Bourdieu's (1993) notion of habitus reflects that societal institutions such as education are tools which are presented as socio-economic equalisers and may, therefore, be used towards upward mobility irrespective of one's socio-economic background. However, because the ability to move upwards is shaped by the amount of capital one has, as well as the cultural dispositions linked to access these forms of capital providing one with the know-how as well as the feel for the game, access to social mobility through social institutions such as education is therefore not equally accessible to all people who may be sharing cultural environments. Social institutions, however, serve to protect the interests of the dominant by reproducing normalised experiences of inclusion and exclusion (Bourdieu, 1985; 1989; 1990; 1993). Within this view, social action is indicative of the interactive consequences of one's habitus and capital within the environment in which the woman is acting.

The habitus presents a conceptualisation of young women as structured without reducing them into passive subjects in the structuring process, recognising their role in the production of their realities. McNay (1999) maintains the habitus is significant in how it places young women in an interactive relationship between their social action and domination in ways reflecting possibilities for the production of new actions, therefore, acknowledging that the women always have an opportunity to generate new actions. As the women navigate various cultural environments, they are exposed to new experiences that may sometimes challenge their dispositions in ways that may alter their perspectives, forcing them to adopt new ways. Bourdieu's (1993) notion of habitus speaks to the engagement between individual and social structures, proposing that young women are not passive entities but are active in shaping both their realities and their social environments. Although the young women are products of social construction through socialisation, they are active in co-creating their realities. This is why an understanding of their reality should consider the active role the women as social agents play in positioning themselves within their lived experience even though their active engagement is done within the confines generated by the structuring of their environment.

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With the above discussion in mind, the following section examines the young women's habitus as framed within the township space, exploring how the intersectional structuring structures that inform and are informed by these social spaces provide a backdrop against which the women's township habitus is constructed. The young women's habitus is, therefore, examined through intersectionality given the recognition of townships as intersectional locations. This means that the young women's township habitus is conceptualised as generated and shaped by the environment within which it is framed. As well as how the women interact with these places, thereby making sense of them as they internalise and subsequently externalise them through their economic actions. This conceptualisation is important in how it proposes an understanding of the habitus as inclusive of women's aspirations. These aspirations are recognised as produced within socio-economic spaces whose cultures tend to frame young women's desires to live certain kinds of lifestyles, thereby generating actions whose intentions are towards the attainment of these desired lifestyles. These actions may sometimes affect the lives of other women within the same social spaces or beyond, depending on their nature and extent.

3.3.2 Examining the habitus through which young women's aspirations are generated

Through an examination of the habitus, this chapter unearths how the young women internalise and externalise cultural patterns, thereby reproducing their realities in subjective context-based ways. The discussion probes the socialisation process, given Bourdieu's (1985; 1989; 1990; 1993) suggestion that reality should be examined through how the structuring structures shape women's perspectives. This means that socialisation in this setting is examined in three ways. First, in how it functions as a system through which young women are introduced into cultural patterns and how cultural patterns are subsequently introduced to young women. Secondly, how socio-economic institutions are introduced to young women and how the women comprehend these socio-economic institutions that serve as guardians of societal cultures, values and norms. Thirdly, how the meanings that the women make through this induction process shapes their perspectives and approaches in ways that inform how they locate themselves within the varying cultural contexts.

As maintained by Bourdieu (1993), it is through the dialectic between subjective and objective moments that reality is constructed. This means that it is through socialisation that habitus is framed; habitus indicating the embodiment of society and its cultural institutions. Therefore, the next section aims to outline how common-sense knowledge, which constitutes the foundation of social action through which realities are reproduced, is transferred to young

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women and reproduced through their lifestyle aspirations (Bourdieu, 1985; 1989; 1990; 1993). The following discussion considers Berger and Luckmann's (1966) notion of socialisation based on the theorists' suggestion that reality should be examined in the way in which women's perspectives and approaches are shaped because it is these processes that inform the social construction of the women's realities. This view suggests that reality, as objectified, is a manifestation of the interaction between the information as offered to socialised women and the meanings the women make as they engage with the shared information.

This viewpoint is also shared by scholars such as Le Cornu (2006) who maintains women as societal agents do not just receive information passively; instead, they process it and change it as part of the process of arranging themselves within the cultural constructs. Hence, women are not only born into a changing cultural reality, but they are part of the process of socially constructing both themselves as cultured societal agents and their reality as lived within cultured socially produced environments (Berger and Luckmann, 1966 and Le Cornu, 2006).

The women's adaptation to this ever-changing society, therefore, is itself a learning process. All forms of learning assist women in processing, making sense of and adapting to societal changes throughout the whole of their lives. Therefore, the social construction of reality becomes an endless endeavour that women engage in within the different phases of their lives based on their transitions within the varying locations. Le Cornu (2006) highlights the fluidity of the context within which reality is socially constructed and the complexity this adds to the dialectic process through which young women are engaged as they socially construct their realities.

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It is along these lines that Berger and Luckmann (1966) maintain that women as societal agents interact with one another and with other people in their social environment and in so doing internalise societal values, principles and norms upon which their choices are founded. This is a stock of knowledge, which is then transmitted over generations through socialisation. Socialisation, conceptualised this way, entails the social distribution of knowledge and experiences as possessed by different individuals within the different societal institutions based on the context within which the distribution occurs. The above conceptualisation suggests that young women as societal agents are engaged in a social interaction through which they produce a reality that in turns produces the conditions of engagement making them both producers and the product of social interaction. Hence, Berger and Luckmann (1966) maintain reality is a dialectic phenomenon in that it is a human product

that continuously acts back upon its producer without whom there is no society and apart from whom there is no social reality.

Berger and Luckmann (1966) propose a triad interactive process through which socialisation occurs: externalisation, objectivation and internalisation. Through externalisation, young women pour themselves out into society through their aspirations and economic activities that are cultural, economic and physical. Through objectivation, women are confronted by the product of their efforts because the product of externalisation confronts them as an objective reality existing outside of them. As a result, through internalisation, young women engage with this objectified reality, making sense of it through subjective meanings, thereby reproducing it. The above discussion proposes that an understanding of society as rooted in the women's externalisation, that is, as a product of their actions, through which their interpretation of societal systems, is made manifest. However, this understanding should be preceded by the recognition of how this externalisation is set within a dialectic process with internalisation which is enabled by socialisation, a process that reflects how individuals internalise norms and values thereby being produced as a societal member who will, in turn, perpetuate the social construction process.

3.3.3 Towards young women's intersectional township habitus

Scholars such as Bebbington (1999), Reed-Danahay (2017), Sakdapolrak (2014) and Staples (2007) propose social action be conceptualised within a perspective that captures the guiding principles behind the social actions, uncovering the complex nature of choice making. This outlook should be indicative of how social action is produced through an interplay of individual and collectively embedded constraints, serving as boundaries or opportunities depending on one's perspectives as shaped by social structures. This means young women's social reality within township spaces should be conceptualised through an understanding that women within the township space embody elements of the social structures simultaneously oppressing and enabling them to undertake actions. However, their understanding is shaped by their perception of where they fit within the social space as well as their perspective of what opportunities their position provides for them. Hence, the need to look beyond social actions to how meaningful choices are made, without pushing away notions of marginality that characterise the township space.

This means it is necessary to understand the perspectives of women and how these perspectives are framed within the township space that then shapes the women's

understanding of what opportunities they are or are not entitled to while equipping them with accessible tools to pursue opportunities. An understanding of the women's perspectives could show how they use this understanding of opportunities to exercise their agency through mechanisms they believe are attainable to them. It is through locating these stances, understandings, agencies and mechanisms in the context within which these women were socialised that they are acknowledged as being produced through the dialectical interplay between spatial positioning and the material realities that characterise these social positions. This approach to the production of social reality is significant in how it provides an understanding of how the reproduction of social inequality is embedded within the women's standpoint in how it frames their attitudes, and awarenesses of available opportunities, limitations and even tastes. Considering Bourdieu's (1985; 1989; 1990; 1993) suggestion that outlooks are products of history and should be understood in how they derive from the field through the way the field imposes its norms on both the production of the outlook and the experiences linked to the outlook, this viewpoint is, therefore, significant. It is important in how it guides young women's understanding of where their place is within society, thereby generating an at-home feeling within them (Bourdieu, 1985; 1989; 1990; 1993). This understanding, in turn, guides the choices that the women make (or do not make) as well as how they use those choices to position themselves within their social spaces.

Bebbington (1999) and Sakdapolrak (2014) propose there is a need for an approach to social reality that captures young women holistically, with perceptions and ideas, hopes and fears, norms and values. A point of view that recognises not all women's actions could be considered strategic and therefore based on conscious or intentional decisions. This outlook is significant in how it may provide an understanding of even the non-economical social actions in which the women engage, thereby giving meaning beyond the material sense. This perspective may provide an understanding of the embeddedness of women's reality within social relations and how they are subsequently linked to the broader social structures such as institutions, which may either enable or constrain social action through their rules of engagement. This outlook is therefore valuable in how it recognises young women as multi-embedded; recognising their economic practices as produced from positions of multi-embeddedness. This multi-embeddedness is characterised by various politics of engagement that sometimes work in contradiction, creating a complex frame within which the women's choices are made, thereby creating frictions that are caused by collisions of expectations or practices.

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It is within this framework that scholars such as Abelev (2009: 119) propose that women's reality needs to be understood as generated within social spaces that endow the women with group-specific worldviews. This is because in every group to which the women belong they adopt ideas, mannerisms and interactional styles internalising them to the point of accepting them as truth that is then transferred into the habitus of both the young women and into the groups to which they belong (Bourdieu, 1985; 1989; 1990; 1993). This then is habitus that comes to form what the women accept as common sense. According to Abelev (2009: 120), this habitus is linked to class positioning and experience in how it is generated within social spaces that are reflective of society's class distinctions. These are distinctions transferred through the habitus in ways that inform a sense of entitlements for women within those groups (Bourdieu, 1985; 1989; 1990; 1993). It is because of this habitus and its class worldviews that middle-class habitus, may, for example, encourage communication traits such as speaking-up; discussing concerns with teachers thereby cultivating an interactional style, including the language patterns, mannerisms and attitudes of dominant institutions such as schools (Bourdieu, 1985; 1989; 1990; 1993). These class dispositions are, however, hidden behind the varying experiences that characterise the middle-class experience in ways that obscure how by belonging to the middle-class, young women belong to a group that is endowed with specific cultural characteristics (Bourdieu, 1989: 169).

According to Bourdieu (1989: 169), social space positioning is indicative of how class hierarchies grant young women systems of dispositions that are characteristics of the class and class divisions within which the women are positioned. These are dispositions serving to provide the women with perspectives that function to distance even those who are close in proximity even if they do not belong to the same class. This division is produced by the habitus that organises perceptions of the world. Hence, young women have points of views which are shaped by their position within social space and in which their will to transform or conserve the social space realities is often expressed. These were points of views that in turn, shaped their positioning through the practices in which they engaged. Scholars such as Abelev (2009), Bebbington (1999) and Sakdapolrak (2014), among others, share Bourdieu's (1989) sentiments.

Moreover, practices, which although are understood as indicators of personal choice, are in fact, products of class positioning as internalised by the habitus. The habitus is, therefore, both the generative principle of objectively classifiable judgements and the system of classification of these practices. It is not only a structuring structure, which organises practices and the perception of practices but also a structured structure transforming the

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principle of division into categories that organise the perception of the social world, which is itself the product of internalisation of the division into social classes (Bourdieu 1985; 1989; 1990; 1993). Each class condition is therefore defined, simultaneously, by its intrinsic properties and by the relational properties, which it derives from its position in the system of class conditions, which is also a system of differences, that is differential positions.

Within the above framework, the township habitus is conceptualised as formed through the internalisation of township spaces as intersectional spaces within which the interplay of race, class, gender and age served to mark boundary-making (Bourdieu, 1985; 1989; 1990; 1993). This intersectionality underlies the discriminatory education system that saw townships locked outside of proper schooling and its cultural capital, which plays a significant role in social positioning of women due to its centrality in providing access to livelihoods that confirm notions of national belonging (Bourdieu, 1985; 1989; 1990; 1993). An inclusion which entails access to the predominant socio-economic capital and its entitlements, that include but are not limited to employment and its benefits reflected in the lifestyle choice of those who have volumes of cultural capital. Hence, Bourdieu (1989: 102) maintains the young women grouped in a class fashioned in a particular manner always bring with them, in addition to the pertinent properties by which they are classified, secondary properties which are smuggled into the explanatory model. This means the township habitus through its exclusion from predominant forms of cultural capital such as education was not only barred from access to cultural dispositions as granted by that specific form of capital but was disqualified from access to a set of secondary predispositions such as access to social and economic capital (Bourdieu, 1985; 1989; 1990; 1993). This set of secondary predispositions would function, in the form of tacit requirements, as real principles of exclusion without ever being formally stated.

The township habitus is therefore indicative of dispositions of alienation that underlie the township spaces and positioning within these social spaces. It is not by accident that the more years one spends within the education system, the more cultural privilege young women attain. However, a result of the entitlements linked to the possession of dominant cultural symbols is the translation to symbolic manifestations which can be used to acquire other forms of capital, some of which can be exchanged for social and economic capital (Bourdieu, 1985; 1989; 1990; 1993). Even though the education system does not always fulfil its promises, it is fundamental in granting access to cultural capital, the benefits of which extend beyond access to employment. By being disqualified from proper education, the township spaces and its young women are, therefore, alienated from accessing livelihoods that are

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associated with education. These are livelihoods which include access to lifestyle choices that although may not seem to hold much meaning, are in fact, essential markers of social position distinctions (Bourdieu, 1985; 1989; 1990; 1993).

One's choice as indicated by where one lives, what kind of property one lives in, what transport system one uses, one's ability to secure a better socio-economic future for one's children, are all fundamentally shaped by one's inclusion/exclusion from the education system. This is due to how the education system grants women not only access to these items but also how it gives them the right to have these items. The opposite of which is also true is that marginalisation from education means isolation from livelihood practices that are linked to this system, hence a habitus generated within the disposition of this alienation is isolated from status symbols linked to the capital (Bourdieu, 1985; 1989; 1990; 1993). This isolation is shaped by the positioning of the women within the intersections of class, race, gender and age; hence, the township habitus embodies different interconnecting forms of alienation. This is an experience that is reflective of Bourdieu's (1989: 170) perspective that the practices engendered by the different habitus appear as systematic patterns of assets. These patterns express the differences objectively inscribed in conditions of existence in the form of systems of differential deviations that when perceived by women endowed with the schemes of perception and appreciation necessary to identify, interpret and evaluate their pertinent features, function as lifestyles.

It is therefore within this context that the township habitus is conceptualised as one that generates marginal livelihoods that are indicative of the inequalities through which it is produced. These inequalities are in turn generated through the habitus in the way in which it engages in economic mechanisms that tend to reposition it within socio-economic disadvantages (Bourdieu, 1985; 1989; 1990; 1993). These socio-economic disadvantages are indicative of the intersection of multiple structuring structures through which they are generated; hence the township habitus generates intersectional and multifaceted forms of inequalities, all of which are enveloped within the lifestyle approaches through which young women construct their realities (Bourdieu, 1985; 1989; 1990; 1993). It is therefore within this frame that township spaces are predominantly endowed with cultural institutions that limit the economic advancement of social agents while subsequently encouraging cultural adoption of alternative forms of economic action (Oduro et al., 2012).

The displays of risky lifestyle choices among young women should, therefore, be understood within the township habitus in how it generates alternative economic patterns. These cultural

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patterns, in turn, serve to distinguish township spaces. This results in the exclusion of the women who, although positioned within these social spaces, engage in lifestyle choices contrary to those framed as township constructs. Hence the labels coconut and cheese boy/girl that is used to signify the outsider construction. The term coconut is used in townships to refer to someone who is regarded as having adopted a white culture. The term cheese boy/girl refers to township-based black people to describe suburban black people or to refer to a township-based person who attends school in a formerly white-only suburb, speaks English like white people do and may even have multi-racial friends.

The township notions are indicative of the township habitus and how this habitus positions itself within other cultural spaces. It is further demonstrative of how it has internalised what it means to be positioned within the township space as well as the lifestyles that are accessible within this social space. Hence, these common-sense ideologies and the generated language through which they are conveyed should be located within the township habitus as a practice-generating system that systematically expresses the necessities and choices inherent in its township positions (Bourdieu, 1985; 1989; 1990; 1993). These dispositions of the township habitus generate practices that are indicative of the socio-economic positioning, which is at the bottom of the socio-economic hierarchy. These positions should not be understood outside of the historical construction of these spaces. However, they should be examined within the material conditions of these social spaces as produced within the fields of cultural production.

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It is within this framework that a habitus that does not embody the risky lifestyle disposition is regarded as resilient. This resilience refers to its ability to withstand the material conditions characterising the township as well as the vulnerabilities produced which serve as forms of exclusion and inclusion. Inclusion into the township culture is indicated by acceptance and embodiments of its normalised risky lifestyle as framed within notions of hustling. Exclusion is indicated in how it does not embody the risky township lifestyle that often contradicts acceptable economic engagements emphasising education and employment as legitimate routes to attaining lifestyle goals thus discouraging any alternative agencies that do not conform to these expectations.

It is resilience that is displayed, for example, by young women who have gone through the poor township education system and endured until they attained their higher education qualification, thereby granting them an opportunity to escape risky lifestyles characterising the township space (Van Breda, 2018: 4). It is a resilience that also indicates the women's

ability to adapt within an education system in which the culture is new to them, given the poor condition of township schools. Hence, Lakomý and Kafková (2017: 371) maintain that resilience speaks to women's ability to remain strong in pursuing one's goal; not giving up despite adverse conditions. It is therefore within the above conceptualisation of the township habitus that this study makes sense of young women's lifestyle choices within the township space.

3.4 Conclusion

As indicated in the above discussion, young women's realities are tied to townships and the material conditions characterising these locations that form the background in which the lifestyles are aspired to and means generated to meet the aspirations. This means that townships should be understood in how they enable access to different lifestyle choices that are framed within the resources that enrich these places. The resources subsequently entitle those who have access to them class-distinguishing lifestyles. This means that when positioned within townships, young women are subsequently positioned within forms of lifestyles through their habitus; a habitus which generates aspirations as shaped by the intersectional material conditions that characterise the townships within which it is constructed.

Bourdieu (1989: 102) proposes that young women grouped in localities always bring secondary properties with them, additional to the properties by which they are classified. These secondary properties are smuggled into the women's realities. Alternatively, in the case of women in townships, this would be a lack of benefits due to the unfavourable material conditions and the low volumes of cultural capital such as poor quality educational institutions within these locations. These low volumes of cultural resources interconnect with the social production of township spaces as shaped by the fields of power, thereby creating a context characterised by social inequalities.

It is these social inequalities that are internalised by the women's township habitus. A habitus which serves as a structuring structure in how it generates economic actions that in turn shape the lifestyle choices of young women within the townships. This means that the women's township habitus, which is structured within a context of intersectional positions of socio-economic inequality, subsequently reproduces these intersectional experiences of socio-economic inequalities through the aspirations and agencies it generates. These economic

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actions are framed within perspective, approaches to life and points of view which although enacted as common sense are, in fact, reflections of its institutionalisation.

It is therefore within this perspective that the township habitus is recognised in how it tends to reposition young women within socio-economic disadvantaged cultural positions in which the women often endure oppressive experiences informed by intersections of race, class, gender and age. Therefore, young women's aspirations and their generated alternative ways to perform middle-class linked lifestyles should be understood as produced through the interplay of resources, domination by fields of power and the habitus.

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CHAPTER 4 A REFLECTION ON ETHNOGRAPHIC FIELDWORK

4.1 Introduction

The next discussion begins with a description of the Eastern Cape Province, wherein Mthatha is located. It outlines fiscal realities informed by structural factors such as access to education, employment as well as the far-reaching economic vulnerability that characterises the Eastern Cape Province in general, specifically the OR Tambo district, where Mthatha is situated. Economic factors are discussed in their impact on the women's livelihoods thus reflecting how they inform young women's gendered experiences such as a lack of economic opportunities in meeting the young women's desires for better compared to bare life.

This discussion is important in how it describes the setting and the socio-demographic profile of the area of study and the research participants by locating the financial realities of the women in Ngangelizwe Township within the socio-economic make-up of Mthatha and its structural realities. These structural realities are informed by the conditions of the King Sabata Dalindyebo (KSD) Municipality and Eastern Cape Province where it is located. This context enables a narrative that unearths the realities of women as negotiated within broader structuring structural factors. The discussion of the Eastern Cape Province, KSD Municipality and Mthatha where Ngangelizwe Township is located is important because it provides details of the background that informed the choice of the qualitative ethnographic research approach employed in the study.

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With the above view in mind, the following discussion uncovers the socio-economic make-up of the Eastern Cape Province examining how this make-up shapes the economic experiences of people in the area, particularly in how it affects women's access to opportunities such as to education and employment. This discussion is followed with a section that explains why qualitative methods were chosen as the most suitable approach given the above-mentioned description of the area of study. Following this is a section that explains ethnography, detailing how it was employed to collect data. The benefits of using ethnography are discussed, and the challenges that the researcher faced are also reflected on.

4.1.1 A brief economic description of the Eastern Cape Province

The Eastern Cape is home to approximately 7 061 700 people, accounting for 12.6% of the South African population, making it the third-highest populated province after Gauteng

(24%) and KwaZulu-Natal (19.9%) (Eastern Cape Socio-Economic Review and Outlook, 2017:41; OR Tambo District Municipality Socio Economic Review and Outlook, 2017: 13 StatsSA, 2016: 2). The majority of the population (20.9%) is located in the OR Tambo district comprising Mthatha, Mqanduli and surrounding rural areas. OR Tambo is therefore mostly rural in character as signalled by the traditional houses in which many of its population resides. King Sabata Dalindyebo local municipality, also referred to as KSD for example, has many of its dwellers living in villages where they farm livestock, as well as dispersed village-type peri-urban township settlements such as Ngangelizwe Township (King Sabatha Dalindyebo Local Municipality IDP, 2017/18-2022: 20; OR Tambo District Municipality Socio Economic Review and Outlook, 2017: 61).

The KSD local municipality is also more densely populated in comparison to other municipalities in the Eastern Cape Province (OR Tambo District Municipality Socio Economic Review and Outlook, 2017: 72). Peri-urban areas such as Ngangelizwe Township experience extreme in-urban migration. This creates significant pressures on infrastructure and facilities as more and more people are drawn to Mthatha, which is the urban centre in the district, in search of employment and education opportunities. The population in the Eastern Cape Province is predominantly young, with roughly 34.8% of the overall population between the ages of 0–14 years. This indicates economic dependency as well as high demand for educational facilities. In this province, there are more females in all the age categories, with women over the age of 30 comprising approximately 56.8% of the total provincial population. (OR Tambo District Municipality Socio Economic Review and Outlook, 2017: 72).

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The gendered population distribution is shaped by economic factors such as the outward migration of males in search of job opportunities in bigger cities such as Johannesburg and Cape Town. This migration is a spatial economic effect of the apartheid migrant labour system (Eastern Cape Economic Review and Outlook, 2017: 41; King Sabata Dalindyebo Local Municipality IDP, 2017/18-2022: 49; OR Tambo District Municipality Socio Economic Review and Outlook, 2017: 13). A demographic trend can be noted through the large female composition in the KSD local municipality, where roughly 53% of the population is female and 47% male. Similar to the young provincial population, the KSD local municipality has a very youthful population with approximately 78% comprising people aged 0 to 35 years.

4.1.2 Education, unemployment and far-reaching economic vulnerability

Only an estimated 28% of the Eastern Cape population over the age of 20 years has either a matric qualification or some form of post-high school qualification (Eastern Cape Economic Review and Outlook, 2017: 43). This is the lowest in the country. Positively, the Eastern Cape Province has the fourth-lowest percentage of individuals with no schooling after the Western Cape (3.2%), Gauteng (4.2%) and the Free State (7.5%) (Eastern Cape Economic Review and Outlook, 2017: 41). However, the OR Tambo district has a high proportion of individuals with no schooling; specifically, 17.1% of the population in this district over the age of 20 years has never attended school. Subsequently, the OR Tambo district was likewise one of the poorest performing districts in the Eastern Cape Province in the 2015 academic year. Three of the five worst-performing school wards in terms of their matric pass rate are located in the OR Tambo district. The KSD Municipality has roughly 43.5% of people with matric, with approximately 8.9% of people holding a Bachelor or Honours degree and approximately 0.3% a Master's or Doctorate (King Sabata Dalindyebo Local Municipality IDP, 2017/18-2022: 54).

The poor education performance in the Eastern Cape Province and OR Tambo district, as well as the KSD local municipality, where Mthatha is situated, is a concern too given the direct link between lack of education, unemployment and poverty. Mthatha has a 37.4% unemployment rate. Unemployment estimates in the Eastern Cape Province show that between the fourth quarter of 2018 and the first quarter of 2019, the economically active population declined by 3%. Subsequently, the non-economically active population increased from 3.6% roughly 2.188 million people. Moreover, the number of work-seekers increased by 2.1%. It is within this context that in 2019 the youth unemployment rate crossed the 50% boundary reaching approximately 54% (King Sabata Dalindyebo Local Municipality IDP Review, 2019/20). Women remain relatively disadvantaged within the labour market, with an unemployment rate of 36.6% compared to 28.9% for men in Eastern Cape In 2017, the unemployment rate for those with post-secondary education in the Eastern Cape was around 14.4%, compared with 35.5% for matriculants and 33.6% for those with incomplete secondary education (Eastern Cape Economic Review and Outlook, 2017: 55). High levels of unemployment and work-seeking create dependency on state assistance and various social networks and alternative avenues with resources.

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A high dependency on social grants exists within the Eastern Cape Province within the setting of high unemployment that has been described. For example, although the Eastern Cape has 12.6% of the total South African population, it accounts for 16.2% of all social grants. This means that the Eastern Cape has the second-highest number of social grant recipients with the majority (68.7%) of this social support going towards children through the child support grant. Subsequently, roughly 35% of people in the KSD local municipality depend on social grants; approximately 65% child support, 17% old age and 7% disability. This dependency on social assistance is in a municipality where forestry and agriculture are the two main economic activities in the OR Tambo district.

It has been estimated that between 2016 and 2017, approximately 45% of Grade 8, 9 and 10 learners in the Eastern Cape Province had experimented with alcohol (Eastern Cape Liquor Board Annual Report, 2016/17: 35). The outcomes of this study also suggested that the Eastern Cape Province is the fourth largest contributor of alcohol consumption in South Africa, making this a province where there is predominantly high alcohol consumption. Mthatha is situated in the OR Tambo district that is reported to be among the four districts in the Eastern Cape Province where alcohol consumption is highest (Eastern Cape Liquor Board Annual Report, 2016/17: 36).

It is the above-mentioned interplay of economic factors that possibly creates the context for young people turning to illicit behaviour. According to a crime analysis report of the South African Police Services SAPS (n.d.) the twelve months from 01 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 reveals that Mthatha is fast becoming one of the most unsafe areas in which to live. It reports that of the top 30 South Africa police stations where murder cases are reported, five are in the Eastern Cape with Mthatha reporting 160 murder cases between April 2017 and March 2018 putting it in the ninth position of the top 30 (SAPS, n.d: 15). In the same period, Mthatha police station reported 236 sexual offences placing it in fifth position among 30 SA police stations that reported the most sexual offences. (SAPS, n.d: 80). It is also noted that Ngangelizwe is listed among the police stations where most contact sexual offences were reported (SAPS, n.d: 80). In addition, Mthatha police station reported 222 rapes, putting it fourth among 30 police stations that reported the most rape cases (SAPS, n.d: 92).

Common crimes in Mthatha are burglaries in residential homes, drug-related crimes, sexual crimes, assault with the intent to inflict grievous bodily harm, robbery with aggravating circumstances and theft out of motor vehicles (StatsSA, 2019). Crime, in general, may have

dropped slightly in Mthatha, but certain categories of crime have increased. Table 2, based on results from StatsSA (2019) for different categories of crime, reveals that that life in Mthatha is unsafe.

***Table 1*: Most common crimes reported in Mthatha police station (source Stats SA, 2019).**

Crime	**2018**	**2019**
Murder	160	181
Sexual offences	236	237
Rape	222	204
Assault with the intent to inflict grievous bodily harm	449	526
Common assault	262	300
Common robbery	37	62
Robbery with aggravating circumstances	393	427
Burglary at residential premises	629	620

4.2 Selecting the appropriate approach to study

This study was underpinned by the desire to gain an in-depth understanding of the lived experiences of young women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha. Such an understanding intended to go beyond the young women's explicit identifications of their township-framed realities, thereby unearthing the hidden meanings shaping these young women's production of social action within these spaces. Subsequently, this study aimed at providing an answer to the research question, how the lived experiences of young women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha are influenced by the structuring of the township? Also, what implication that has in the ways young women negotiate their realities? The research approach employed is therefore significant in answering these research questions through which the study's rationale of exploring the agencies of young women is met and how these agencies are sometimes compromised by the structuring of the township.

A qualitative research method was valuable in how it captured the subjective meanings underlying the social actions, thus producing comprehensive township outlooks that are steered by the voices of the research participants. It was, however, also significant in the philosophical suggestion that it provided about the production of social reality as reflected by the assumptions upon which qualitative research methods are formulated. This is an

argument maintained by scholars such as Hathaway (1995: 536) who proposes that the decision to use a specific research technique is laden with assumptions concerning the nature of knowledge and reality, how one understands knowledge and reality, and the process of acquiring knowledge and knowledge about reality. Hence, when researchers make their choice of which research methods to employ, they implicitly assume a structure of knowledge, an understanding and perception of reality, and a researcher's role in the research process.

With the above introduction in mind, the following discussion outlines the qualitative research paradigm within which this study was framed. The discussion begins by providing the philosophical underpinnings of qualitative research. Following this is a discussion on ethnography, which is the approach of enquiry applied in this study. The discussion of ethnography lays a foundation for the discussion on the sampling method, data collection, data analysis and interpretation techniques. This then ends with the grounds upon which the results of the study may be 'generalised'.

4.3 Qualitative research paradigm

Creswell (2013: 43), Fossey et al. (2002: 718), Neuman (2014: 103) and Sandewolski (2000: 334) among others characterise qualitative research methods as scientific data collection methods employed to uncover and interpret social reality. According to these theorists, qualitative research methods enable researchers to develop an understanding of experiences and underlying meanings of those experiences through the research participant's perspective. This is because qualitative research provides ways to examine individuals or social groups within the context in which their realities are constructed. Fossey et al. (2002: 718) suggest that qualitative methods are useful for eliciting contextual information that improves understandings of social groups thereby providing researchers with in-depth information from which they can generate knowledge about social reality. The above characterisation of qualitative research proposes that qualitative research methods are often shaped by relationships between the researcher and the research participants. Hence, building good relationships between researchers and participants often underlies the ability of the researcher to draw in-depth information from the research participants (Fossey et al., 2002: 720 and Sandewolski, 2000: 334).

It is the above-mentioned understanding of qualitative research methods that underlined the selection of the qualitative research paradigm through which the researcher scientifically

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observed Ngangelizwe Township as a research site while also engaging in interactive enquiry with the participants. This is because, for this study, it was important for the researcher to understand first, the area of study in its potential influence as a socio-economic environment in which the women's realities are constructed. Secondly, to interact with the participants in ways that would provide an understanding of the participant's interpretations of their realities. It is, therefore, by observing socio-economic engagements as they occurred at Ngangelizwe Township on a day-to-day basis that the researcher uncovered the complexities that lie beneath the participant's common-sense views about reality.

The researcher approached the study with two intentions based on which the data collection method was selected. The first intention was the desire to engage with participants in ways that would allow her to draw rich data that would provide her with an in-depth understanding of the realities of young women in Ngangelizwe Township in Mthatha from the women's perspective. It was, therefore, the need for in-depth experiences, guided by the women's interpretation of their lived experiences that led to the selection of qualitative research methods. These methods promised the researcher access into the daily lives of the young women through scientific observation of their interactions partaking in conversations with the participants. This scientific engagement required a selection of a data collection method that would enable the researcher to stay close to the participants for extended periods of time building relations of trust. This approach to data collection is reiterated by Mikecz (2012: 482) who proposes social scientists are often driven by the goal of understanding the social world from the subject's perspective thereby unfolding meaning of their lived world. The second need was to employ a method through which the researcher would be able to deeply observe reality as it unfolded in the area of study. Thus, examining the routines within Ngangelizwe Township in ways that would enable the researcher to examine the complexities that characterise the space in which the participant's realities were produced. Therefore, the success of qualitative research methods was in providing research practices that encouraged intensive interaction between research participants and the researcher. This was through engagement in some of the socio-economic activities commonly characterising the lifestyle of young women in Ngangelizwe Township while also enabling the researcher to observe and examine reality by positioning herself within some of the participant's social worlds.

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4.4 Employing Ethnography

It is within the above-discussed conceptualisation of qualitative research techniques that ethnography was employed. This enabled the researcher to participate in social activities with the participants as an insider while observing them as an outsider. The researcher subsequently engaged them in interviews through which the scientific observations would be explained in the participant's words showing their understanding. The ethnographic research approach was therefore selected because it often yields more detailed, contextualised findings than other qualitative data collection methods because of its embedded fieldwork approach.

The uniqueness of ethnography lies in recognising that the realities of participants are socially constructed by those who participate in it. In addition, these realities are framed by the culture which characterises the environment within which they are produced (Hathaway, 1995: 545). These realities are complex, multidimensional and intersectional; reflecting the heterogeneous experiences that characterise the lives of research participants. Hence the need to observe participants over long periods of time. During observations, the researcher would seek to examine how the experiences are shaped through daily social and economic engagements that occur with or without the full awareness of the participants (England, 1994: 243). For example, the everyday act of buying bread, milk, onions and tomatoes (which are the most commonly purchased items from the spaza shops) by the participants was mostly shaped by relationships of trust with the spaza shop owners. The relationship was indicated by the willingness of the spaza show owner to loan the women-households food items upon indication of when the money would be paid back. The relationships were also reflected by how some of the young women's children would return from the spaza shop eating a sweet or a packet of amalopisi (kinds of chips sold for R 1.50) that they got from an uncle or aunt, which is how they refer to the spaza shop owners. The women would only buy essentials from different spaza shops if the items were not available in the spaza shop usually frequented. They chose to go to the shops that sold fresh and inexpensive bread compared to the spazas that they claimed were more expensive with stale bread since they did not have many customers. This was one of the observations that created awareness of the complex spatially negotiated economic interactions that underlie socio-economic action in the lives of participants. With the preceding view in mind, the following section discusses the researcher's approach to ethnographic data collection. The discussion will also explain some

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of the challenges encountered as the researcher prepared to enter the field and adjustments the researcher made to address the shortcomings.

4.4.1 Preparing to enter the field

Given that the researcher was born and raised in Ngangelizwe Township, the field of study presented as a familiar social space with her being regarded as an insider. However, caution needed to be exercised regarding this position; specifically, the researcher's long separation from the social space coupled with the social, economic and cultural transformations that have occurred within the social space. This presented the field of study as an unfamiliar setting. This spatial condition repositioned the researcher as an outsider not only due to unfamiliarity with the transitioned social space but also because of spatial mobility. Spatial mobility may have resulted in many familiar people migrating from this space, while many unfamiliar people might now occupy the area. These continuous movements change the spatial demographics rendering it unfamiliar and reconstructed to the researcher.

Although the researcher could draw from prior knowledge about the social environment in choosing where to look for research participants, when to set up interviews and when not to navigate the streets, this prior knowledge could not be rendered as grounds to claim an insider's position. It is this view that guided the researcher's preparation to enter the field. The first field experience was aimed at reintroducing the researcher to Ngangelizwe Township. The experience was also intended to give the researcher an idea of how to plan data collection in ways that factored in the travelling between Durban (where the researcher lived) and Mthatha (where the research would occur) as these would influence how the researcher engaged in ethnographic research. The researcher was aware of the conflicting need to spend extended time in the field while being mindful of the various constraints. These were not only budgetary but also the researcher's family commitments as a single mother; hence there was an identified need to engage in a preliminary field entry.

4.4.2 First field scenario: declined invites into the study

Upon receiving ethical clearance (see Appendix E for ethics approval), the researcher went to Mthatha. This was not the researcher's first research experience in the area of study as the researcher had conducted one on the lived experiences of elderly women who head households in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha, in 2010. It is because of this prior research experience that the researcher did not anticipate any potential challenges either with creating relationships or identifying participants in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha.

The researcher spent the first few days visiting family members who are scattered in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha Central Business District (CBD) and Norwood suburb in Mthatha announcing her return to Mthatha. These meet and greet visits were also opportunities to observe potential research participants in the area. During the second week, the researcher identified five young women, two of whom were friends of each other who came to the researcher's family home to deliver a message. The researcher took the opportunity to introduce herself to them, telling them about the study in which the researcher was engaged and asked them if they would be interested in becoming participants: an invitation which they politely declined.

Three other young women were identified as they stood at the street corner on a Saturday afternoon chatting. The researcher introduced herself and explained the study in which the researcher was engaged and requested the women to participate, but they too declined. The researcher turned to family members asking them if they knew any young women whom she could request to participate in the study. Two young women were identified, and the researcher approached them. The women agreed to take part in the study, which seemed like a breakthrough however when the researcher approached one of the women to interview her, the woman stated that she was shy and was not comfortable talking about her life. The second young woman who had agreed to take part in the study kept postponing her meeting with the researcher, stating her studies as the reason why she was not available.

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The researcher spent the first three to four weeks observing young women as they navigated Ngangelizwe Township. The researcher drove in and out of Mthatha (CBD), observing economic activities and spending time with family members. The researcher had conversations with them about how life in Mthatha had changed since the last time the researcher was there, which was more than three years before the current research experience. After spending approximately four weeks engaged in these activities, the researcher left Mthatha to reflect on her experience as it became evident that collecting data would not be as easy as the researcher had anticipated.

4.4.3 Second field scenario: scouting for participants through a semi-insider

After leaving Mthatha, the researcher contacted a sociology honours student at Walter Sisulu University (WSU main campus) in Mthatha whom the researcher knew, asking her to visit Ngangelizwe Township in between her studies to identify potential research participants. The student was selected based on her familiarity with sociological research principles, social

science research methods and familiarity with Mthatha even though she did not live in Ngangelizwe Township. The researcher provided her with money for transport, as she would use a taxi to commute from her house to Ngangelizwe Township. In addition, the researcher provided her with money that she would use to buy data and airtime, so there would be constant updates on her observations.

The research assistant visited Ngangelizwe Township between 1:00 and 3:00 p.m. in the afternoon depending on her study schedule and that she commuted by taxi. She would be dropped off in different streets, walk and identify young women whom she would approach introducing herself and stating the reason why she was there, asking if they would be willing to partake in a study. Her approach was similar to that which was used by the researcher, one that adhered to the grounds within the ethical standards that guide the conduct of qualitative research through which consent was central in obtaining research participants. The consent was sought through explaining the aim of the research, guaranteeing anonymity, letting the potential participants know that their participation is voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study anytime they wanted to without offering a reason for the withdrawal (Genzuk, 2003: 8 and McNamara, 2009: 173).

The research assistant's involvement in the research was cut short before it could yield fruitful results. On a Saturday afternoon, as she walked down the street in Ngangelizwe Township, she was robbed by two young men who pointed knives at her demanding her cellphone. She gave them her cellphone, and they quickly disappeared. This experience made the researcher realise that crime was an issue, one that the researcher too would be vulnerable to and would have to consider when going into the field. The researcher discontinued the research assistant's involvement for fear of exposing her to any further harm. The contacts gained during the research assistant's trips were lost as they were stored in the assistant's stolen cellphone.

The two related field scenarios made it obvious that the researcher was a learner in a potentially risky field of study. This meant relooking at Ngangelizwe Township through perspectives shared by scholars such as Chughtai and Myers (2016: 1) and Jones and Smith (2017: 99), who propose that researchers become learners who should treat the field as an unfamiliar setting. The unfamiliar position enables the researcher to learn through watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions and collecting whatever information there is on the issues of concern. This is a learner experience that the researcher took into

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account as the researcher made a third attempt to reintroduce herself into the field as shared below.

4.4.4 Third field scenario: thrownness into the field of study

Thrownness[2], according to Chughtai and Myers (2016: 2) signifies how ethnographers enter the spatial environment of social practices that are driven by politics of negotiation and interpersonal interpretations that inform experiences of belonging. Hence thrownness is grounded in and entwined with the researcher's own fore-meanings and prejudices along with the fore-meanings and prejudices of the research participants who are already positioned within the field of research.

Within the context of the study, thrownness captured how the researcher made a breakthrough into the field of study through being placed in unfamiliar social scenarios that oriented the researcher to the typical social behaviours of young women in Ngangelizwe Township. This orientation was important in gaining the researcher access into the young women's social realities as they are constructed through occurrences that happen within the young women's social spaces following the two unsuccessful experiences of trying to find potential participants. Thrownness was significant to the study, given Chughtai and Myers's (2016: 2) suggestion that the field is the home of occurrences. This suggests that occurrences can only be understood as they show themselves. Therefore, entrance into the home of occurrences is consequently an encounter of a rite of passage into a world and its historic events as they unfold. By throwing herself into the social occurrences, the researcher, therefore, positioned herself within various scenarios where the researcher encountered social events that framed her approach into the sampling and data collection stages of research.

One of the researcher's experiences of thrownness into the field of this study was through a family funeral (of the researcher) which occurred approximately three months after the attempt by the research assistant to find participants. Although a sensitive and painful time in the researcher's family it was significant for the study because the event centred on a young woman who embodied all the features of the potential research participants regarding

[2] The concept of thrownness was coined by Heidegger (1927) in his suggestion that human beings are thrown in world in which they are faced with many 'not at home feelings' such as anxiety. However, as they engage with daily activities and gain understandings of the world in which they live, they may choose to throw themselves out of their thrown condition, thus gaining an 'at-home feeling'. In this study, this concept is used to indicate how the researcher entered unfamiliar social activities and social spaces in the field through which the researcher met and acquainted with potential research participants.

class, race, gender, age and location. The event introduced the researcher to a group of young women when the researcher had to deliver a speech at the funeral thus introducing her as one of the societal members who belonged in the area even though many of the young women were not familiar with her. This introduction marked the first of many experiences of thrownness into the field. It directed a spotlight onto the researcher in ways that made the face of the researcher familiar to the young women who attended the funeral, thus introducing the researcher into the field of study and to potential participants.

Notwithstanding the aforementioned research milestone, however, finding one's feet is not a once-off experience but a process that ethnographers go through each time they navigate the field, thereby encountering new experiences or social groups to whom they are presented as strangers (Fine and Hallett, 2013: 190). This meant that the researcher had to open her eyes to other potential opportunities that could bring her even closer to young women in ways that demonstrated worthiness to be accommodated into the group space. Even if this accommodation was not as a participant but an observer, thus maximising on the above-mentioned introduction that occurred during her speech at the funeral. One of the opportunities that the researcher used was asking the group of young women if she could travel with them in their car as they were travelling from the graveyard to the young woman's home to eat after which people would make way to their homes.

On the journey, after being silent for a short while, one of the young women in the car, in her early twenties said 'Uxolo sisi wam, besicela ukudlala iingoma sisele, sonwabe njengoba besisenza nomhlobo wethu. Simamele ingoma zakhe' (Excuse me, my sister, may we please kindly play our choice of music and indulge in alcoholic beverages like we would normally do with our late friend and listen to her favourite songs). The researcher agreed and laughed as the researcher watched and listened to them converse about their friend. The researcher interpreted the young women's request, not as the young women asking permission per se. Instead, they were making her aware that they were about to unmask themselves so that they could at that moment be who they are in the absence of unknowers (strangers or people who do not know them too well or may not have seen them in a certain way e.g. singing and dancing) as the researcher was the only one. The moment was therefore very significant in how it opened 'the curtain' into the real social behaviour of the women within their social world, thus throwing the researcher into the field as an observer. This granted her an opportunity to learn how to later communicate with young women in ways that may make them agree to partake in the study. It subsequently gave the researcher entrance to observe,

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orient herself and test her behaviour so that the researcher would know how to position herself in ways that did not cause discomfort among the social agents.

As the women were chatting and singing along, they shared plans for the evening to host a party after the funeral, also casually known as after-tears, in celebration of their friend's life. This information provided yet another opportunity to go behind the curtain into the young women's social world. The researcher asked permission to go with the young women to the club where the event would be hosted that evening. The young women laughed in response, asked if the researcher was serious and then agreed. This was important in drawing the researcher closer to them. These aforementioned scenarios became significant in how the researcher found herself partially accepted into the social space of the young women in ways the researcher was unable to in her initial approaches. This experience suggested the importance of a researcher's flexibility in ethnographic research. This is a view shared by theorists such as England (1994), Hathaway (1995), Neumann (2014) who maintain that ethnographic research entails manoeuvring around unexpected circumstances, which requires a researcher to be flexible and always open to change.

Clubbing (going out to a nightclub where people socialise, dance to music and drink alcoholic beverages) is only one of the activities that the young women in Ngangelizwe Township partake in to socialise. This meant that the researcher needed to use the lessons learnt in her aforementioned encounters by throwing herself into diverse social events if the researcher was to reach young women in ways that would capture their heterogeneous realities. The researcher went to a local church that the researcher attended when the researcher lived in Ngangelizwe Township. When an opportunity was granted for visitors to come forth and greet the congregation, introducing themselves and sharing where they were from, the researcher did so. Greeting the congregation was the researcher's way of repositioning herself in Ngangelizwe as an insider with an outsider's experience thus making her less of a stranger even though the researcher was a stranger to many in the congregation. The researcher stayed after the service to meet and greet congregants, therefore, acquainting herself with young women, some of whom knew her and many of whom did not.

The above scenarios marked a breakthrough into her ethnographic research, as the researcher was no longer a total stranger in the young women's social world because the above experiences served as exposure to their social realities. It is based on the success of this approach that the researcher decided to take note of social events in Ngangelizwe Township as these would play a central role in bringing her close to the community. The researcher

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could use these to network identifying potential research participants. Hence the researcher spent approximately a month connecting with young women and general social agents in the area of study, observing social patterns and exchanging cellphone numbers with willing young women in order to maintain communication. This perspective is shared by scholars such as Chughtai and Myers (2016) and Fine and Hallett (2013) who conceptualise entrance into the field as an important milestone that marks exposure into new social practices.

Bucerius (2013: 691) maintains that without obtaining permission into the cultural realities of group members, ethnographers might struggle to collect valid and reliable information allowing them to understand the complexities of and motivations for real-life behaviour. Bucerius's (2013) view was marked by how the researcher was unable to gain access into the young women's social world when she initially introduced herself as a researcher without being accepted into the young women's social circles. Dunlap and Johnson (1998: 129) also share this perspective, maintaining that exposure is crucial as it allows an understanding of the rules underlying social ties within the specific contexts. This is important because social relations are based upon contextual notions of trust. This trust is conceptualised within the framework of reciprocity, among other features. Hence, the need to pay close attention to people's culture, language, expressions and thinking patterns in order to understand how to form relations that will make participants comfortable enough to accept a researcher and not feel the need to hide their complex realities.

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According to Dunlap and Johnson (1998: 129), obtaining this trust does not entirely depend on acquiring an insider status. However, it is shaped to a large extent by how research participants perceive the potential presence of the researcher in their social space. Hence, access to the researcher's participants' social world was critical in showing the participants that the researcher's presence in their reality posed no risk. The thrownness and the mingling were, therefore, fruitful in teaching the researcher how to approach potential research participants during sampling and data collection processes that followed the entry phase. From the aforementioned experience, the researcher planned her ethnographic data collection in which the researcher would divide her field experience into that of months on and off the field. This would allow the researcher to spend sufficient time observing and interviewing young women without neglecting her roles outside of research. During the months when the researcher was not in the field, the researcher would continue communicating with the participants, thus sustaining the relationship. This was to remind them that the researcher is still an insider in their social world even when the researcher is not physically present, thus

ensuring the bonds forged with the potential participants were not broken. It is this conceptualisation of ethnographic research that guided the following scientific observation and interview sessions.

4.5 Gaining consent for in-depth conversations and first-hand observations

The next visit to the field was aimed at validating that the identified participants met the sample criteria. Following which, consent would be requested from the identified participants upon which the interviews with the women would begin (See Appendix A for an English consent form and Appendix B for isiXhosa consent form). The researcher had in the previous visit identified approximately twenty young women who fitted her sample, which was age approximately 21 to 29 years, gender, women, and present- and long-term residences of Ngangelizwe Township. All the identified participants spoke isiXhosa and English interchangeably with some using local terminology/slang. The researcher who is fluent in isiXhosa and English engaged with the participants in both languages while relying on the participant's explanation for the local terminology that they sometimes used. As a result, the interviews were held in both English and isiXhosa and then translated and transcribed by the researcher into English (See Appendix C for the interview schedule). The participants were primarily identified based on observations made during the social activities; observations that suggested that these young women carried rich information that could be valuable for the study.

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It is following the identification of the young women described above that the researcher approached them, asking to meet and request their consent to take part in the study. Initially, two women were identified and contacted. Once the identifying characteristics were validated and consent to participate in the study was given the same procedure was followed to identify eighteen more participants with some declining to take part; others willingly signing consent. Twenty young women were invited; however, six young women declined to take part in the study. One research participant invited her friend to take part in the study to which she consented. All fifteen young women were long-term residents of Ngangelizwe Township. Nevertheless, although residing within the same township, they lived in different sections.

The above method to select participants relied on the perspective of theorists who suggest that in purposive sampling, subjects are selected based on the study's purpose with the expectation that each participant will provide unique and rich information of value to the

study (Creswell, 2013; Etikan et al., 2016; Gentles et al., 2015; Neuman, 2014 and Polkinghorne, 2005). In addition, they maintain that the discretion on sample size as well as the purpose of the research lies with the researcher. Hence, qualitative research embraces sampling methods that are shaped by the research objectives, context and realities within which the study occurs. The above views were similarly shared by Neuman (2014: 273) who defines purposive sampling as a judgemental-based selection of research participants. This is a participant selection method through which the researcher is guided by their expert knowledge to decide whom to include in the data collection process. This process differs from purposive sampling in quantitative research due to the varying epistemological underpinnings of quantitative versus qualitative knowledge. In qualitative research, due to its aim to generate information to help people understand rather than generalisations of circumstance, purposive sampling is not aimed at drawing a sample that is representative of the overall population of the study. Purposive sampling is rather a selection of cases that fit the purposes of the study. This perspective shared by Etikan et al. (2016: 1) maintains that purposive sampling is used when the research does not aim to generate results that will be used to create generalisations pertaining to the entire population. It is with the above understanding that participants took part in the study (pseudonyms are used in Table 1 and throughout the study).

***Table 2*: Research participant information**

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Pseudonym	**Age**	**Children**	**Occupation**	**Household Headship**	**Employment Status of Household Head**	**No of People in the Household**
Akhona	20	1	Student	Older Sister	Receptionist	4
Aphelele	23	1	Unemployed	Mother	Administrator	5
Aphiwe	22	2	Student	Mother	Teacher	5
Asanda	21	0	Employed	Mother	Administrator	4
Babes	22	0	Student	Mother	Unemployed	4
Busi	26	2	Unemployed	Grandmother	Retired Nurse	4
Chuma	23	1	Employed	Father	Mineworker	6
Nomhle	25	1	Unemployed	Father	Construction Worker	8

Nono	23	2	Employed	Mother	Unemployed	4
Sasa	21	0	Student	Mother	Unemployed	4
Sbongile	27	1	Unemployed	Mother	Unemployed	3
Snazo	21	1	Student	Grandmother	Retired Nurse	4
Soso	22	1	Unemployed	Mother	Vendor	5
Yonela	26	1	Employed	Grandmother	Retired Nurse	4
Zaza	22	1	Student	Grandmother	Retired Seamstress	3

4.5.1 Observation and follow-up discussions

The researcher did not have a planned approach to the first in-depth discussions and observations, rather letting the discussions unfold based on the encounters with the participants who had granted consent. This means that no formal interviews were scheduled with the participants. This was done in order to avoid creating a formal arrangement that could potentially make the participants uncomfortable being themselves during the conversations. This was also done to freely allow the conversations to occur as led by the participants. It is within this view that the following observation experiences occurred, as discussed below, and were used as an introduction to in-depth conversations about the lifestyle choices and lived experiences of participants in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha.

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4.5.2 Scenario one: observing Busi

The first evening of the observation occurred as the researcher decided to visit Busi (participant) at her home. When the researcher arrived at Busi's house, the researcher noted a red car parked not too far from Busi's home. Inside the home, Busi's grandmother was cooking dinner and Busi's children were playing. The researcher greeted and asked how Busi's grandmother was keeping, introduced herself and engaged in a conversation about the ailments of growing old. During the conversation, Busi appeared from the bedroom, coming to check who was talking to her grandmother. Greetings, laughter and the exchanging of pleasantries ensued. It was at this point that the researcher excused herself from the kitchen, moving to the lounge with Busi. Busi's friend, a young woman like herself, was in the lounge. They were both dressed in mini-skirts, pumps (shoes) and high-waist jackets wearing weaves and were putting on make-up. The researcher saw that they were dressed similarly and getting

ready for some occasion and made a joke, saying that it is afternoon; therefore, the ladies should be preparing to sleep; it is not morning. Both Busi and her friend laughed at the researcher's joke.

Busi introduced her friend and the researcher to each other, saying that her friend was a student at WSU. Busi then mentioned that they were getting ready to go somewhere. The researcher asked if the researcher could take them to where they were going so, they would not have to worry about catching a taxi. After giving the offer some thought, Busi and her friend agreed. Busi said that the person they were going with was panicking anyway since they were taking long to get ready. The researcher then asked about the red car that was parked not far from Busi's home. This turned out to be the person with whom Busi and her friend were going to travel with. Busi then made a quick call to the person in the red car to alert the person that they would meet later. When Busi and her friend were ready, they picked up their black Channel shoulder bags. The researcher left with them, leaving behind Busi's grandmother and the children. As they entered the researcher's car, the researcher noticed that the red car had left .

On the way to town (Mthatha CBD) where Busi and her friend were going, the researcher maintained the absence of the present, thus allowing Busi and her friend to chat among themselves and discuss their upcoming evening. It was easy for the researcher to maintain an absence of the present as both women were seating at the backseat while the researcher was sitting alone in the front seat driving. Thus, drawing from Hoepfl (1997: 52) and Reeves et al. (2013: 1368) who maintain that observation is a common form of data collection in field research in which the researcher maintains a passive presence, being as discreet as possible and not interacting with participants. According to Hoepfl (1997: 52), observation can lead to deeper understandings than interviews alone because through observations researchers are able to grasp events as they occur while noticing things that are said and done by research participants. These may be things that the research participants may not be aware of.

The short trip was therefore useful in how it gave the researcher ideas to begin in-depth conversations with Busi as a form of a catching up on the conversations that occurred during the observation. Busi and her friend's conversation was cut short as they arrived at the hotel and bar. Busi asked the researcher to take photos of them with her cellphone and send them to her before the researcher drove off. Once the researcher had sent the photos to Busi, she and her friend went into the bar waving goodbye. A man was standing outside the hotel and bar casually watching as the pictures were being taken. He approached the researcher as Busi

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and her friend were leaving. He asked the researcher which school the researcher went to and if the researcher was coming inside for drinks. Before the researcher could answer, Busi returned, hugged the researcher and whispered, bye, thus signalling that the researcher was not permitted to enter Busi's social world beyond the experiences shared. The man did not wait for a response as he went into the hotel and bar. This marked the end of the evening for the researcher.

4.5.3 Scenario two: observing Akhona

A second observation experience that opened the way to in-depth conversations was with Akhona. The researcher sent a message to Akhona on a Saturday to find out if she was at home and available for a social time. Akhona shared that she had plans to go to an event in her neighbourhood during the day. At some point in the conversation, she invited the researcher to accompany her since it was not far from the researcher's family home. The researcher accepted the invitation. The researcher walked to Akhona's home, and upon entering, greeted the older sister and the two young children. Akhona was dressed in tightfitting Guess jeans, a denim jacket and Nike sneakers. Akhona was wearing her weave, and her face was made up. She was occasionally brushing her weave while talking to the children who were asking to go with her.

The researcher greeted and introduced herself to Akhona's sister while playing with the children. This gave Akhona time to check where she had placed her Apple cellphone while thinking of a way to leave without the children noticing so that they would not become tearful. The researcher took out some money, in coin form, from the researcher's pocket and gave it to the children to go and buy themselves some snacks during the day. Suddenly their attention shifted from Akhona to the money. They thanked the researcher, calling the researcher aunty. Akhona indicated that she was ready to leave as she took her Aldo handbag, kissed the children and said goodbye to her sister. The researcher followed Akhona's lead, and they left.

Akhona and the researcher were chatting while occasionally exchanging greetings with neighbours. Some of them asked Akhona for R 2 to buy a cigarette (commonly known as a loose/feg/entjie). Others would ask Akhona for a beer which costs roughly R 20.00 stating how thirsty they were to which Akhona often responded with laughter sometimes signalling that she would see them later. During these encounters, Akhona would turn to the researcher and give a description of the people who were greeting them, what they did for a living and

how their lives had changed over time. A conversation evolved between them leading to reflections of how life is in Ngangelizwe; how some things have changed, and some seem to have remained the same. This continued as the researcher posed some questions based on the noted activity in the streets where some people were walking up and down, some seemingly going to work, others making their way to the sheebeens, others to the Sabbath church where plenty of cars were parked, and children were playing on the streets making it a busy Saturday.

As Akhona and the researcher walked towards the house where the social event was, a man standing next to a black BMW car, seemingly attending the same function, called Akhona. The researcher continued walking slowly towards the gate, and Akhona ran to catch up with the researcher upon which Akhona immediately pointed at the man she was talking to with her head and stated the following: 'Yambona ke lo, uyatsitsa qha uthanda amacherry ingxaki yakhe. Kudala endifuna qha soze ndimvume. Ndingaba yintoni zizlay queen zase lokishini ngomntu wazo' (you see this one, he gives out money to his woman, but he likes women too much, that's his problem. He has been asking us to date for a while now, but I will never date him. What would I be, with township slays queens fighting me for their man). A statement to which they both laughed as they went into the house. A statement that the researcher took note of as the researcher planned to get more detail on during her conversations with Akhona. The Saturday event was marked with many observations as the researcher carefully observed the turn of events while also paying attention to Akhona observing how Akhona interacted with the different people.

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A similar approach was used in engaging with the other research participants thus drawing from scholars such as Mulhall (2008: 308) who maintains that observation is valuable in how it captures the social setting in which people function. It is through observation that it is possible to ascertain whether what people say they do and what they do in reality correspond. This theorist is suggesting that observation is significant in how it can be used by the researcher to corroborate information by observing how people act matches with the narratives that they share. However, this should be done while recognising that what people do and what they say are both valid in their own right and may simply represent different perspectives on the data. Hence, none of the techniques, observation and interviews, is better than the other, but they work together to provide in-depth information on socially produced realities. This suggests that although observation may sometimes produce different data from the data presented through interviews, this does not mean that either information is better. It

instead offers an opportunity for a researcher to probe more and seek more understanding, thereby unearthing more meanings behind the realities.

The above understanding is the perspective that underlies observation as employed in the study, where the researcher engaged in various moments through which the researcher gazed at the field as social agents engaged in their realities. This gaze was to observe how social agents participate in the construction of their social realities. These could be participations that sometimes present themselves without any considerations because they are deeply ingrained in the patterns of the social agents, thereby appearing as the natural order of the day. These could be observations that captured the routines of social agents within the township space, for instance, as they travel back and forth to their place of work, or how they communicate in ways that although are ordinary, are indicative of the structural positioning of various members within these social spaces. These sometimes silent gazes enabled the researcher to listen to the various meanings in the expressions used by different social agents; listening to understand their meanings and how they knit together a picture of the township space.

These observations were in the form of participant and non-participant observations. The researcher engaged in social activities with the participants, such as accompanying them when they went to local clubs. In other instances, the researcher would go to the local clubs without the participants to observe social activities within these clubs. The aim was to observe how they engaged in social activities and to understand how their notions of fun were framed. These observations were significant in how they enabled the researcher to alter some research questions, thereby asking contextual questions whose responses would provide deeper understandings about the realities within Ngangelizwe Township. Mulhall (2008: 308) and Neuman (2014: 454) share this perspective, maintaining observations are significant in how they reveal something of impact; something that may be hidden in how people interact. What people do is significant in how it expresses social information. In addition to observing what they do, there is also information about who is present, who just left, how the mood has changed. All those details are significant in providing an in-depth understanding of the event. As Mulhall (2008: 308) proposes, observation is also an ongoing dynamic activity that is more likely than interviews to provide evidence for processes as they move and evolve continually while simultaneously informing about the influence of the physical environment. It is with the above understanding of the complementary role of

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observations and in-depth conversations that the following discussions consider ways in which the researcher engaged in in-depth interviews with the participants.

4.5.4 Continuing conversations

Barrett and Twycross (2018: 63) propose that collecting data through interviews is a characteristic of many qualitative studies. This occurs because of the direct access interviews give to rich data. Data is not limited to the information participants are providing but also the expressions that couple the information which too serve as important data. Hence, as suggested by Barrett and Twycross (2018: 63), face-to-face interviews are common forms of data collection used in qualitative research. Neuman (2014: 461) shares this perspective maintaining that interviews are important in how they provide an opportunity for the researcher to probe for more information, thereby absorbing more data from the research participant. The researcher in paying close attention to the participant, can scrutinise all the participant's reactions, including their body language.

In the distinction between unstructured, semi-structured and structured interviews, semi-structured interviews comprise several key questions that help to define the areas to be explored, allowing the interviewer or participant to explore the issues further (Gill et al., 2008: 291). It is for this reason that this interview format is used most frequently within qualitative enquiries. A perspective that is shared by theorists such as Sandewolski (2000: 338) whose discussion suggests that a well-designed semi-structured interview ensures data are captured in key areas while also allowing flexibility for participants to bring their own personality and viewpoint to the discussion.

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It is within the above framework that semi-structured interviews were employed in the study. The semi-structured interviews lasting approximately 60 minutes each, conducted in both English and isiXhosa, all occurred in environments chosen by the participants. Allowing the participants this choice was to ensure they were comfortable and that privacy was maintained. Privacy was important because participants wished to hide some of the details related to their social life from the adults in their family. The participant's desire to conceal these details was a sign of respect[3] to the adults but also to prevent the adults from judging them and using

[3] Respect is deeply emphasised within black households. This respect is framed within notions of obedience whereby children are expected to do as instructed by adults without questioning them. This obedience is shown through the silence that is maintained by children towards adults. As maintained by Nduna and Sikweyiya (2015: 541), respecting adults means not raising issues that may be interpreted as disrespectful. These issues include talking about sexual matters, parties and alcohol. This respect borders on fearing the parents. This perspective is shared by Nduna and Sikweyiya (2015: 542) who maintain that children within black households

the information as a basis to label them with belittling terms. The initial interviews entailed a mutual sharing of experiences, particularly background information, slowly transitioning into focusing more on the participants and their lived experiences, as indicated in the scenario below.

4.5.5 Scenario one: an in-depth conversation with Snazo

The researcher often used weekends to meet with the participants who were students and those who were employed. The aim of this was to avoid disturbing them when they were studying and/or working. During the week, the researcher engaged in interviews with the unemployed participants, thus also having the opportunity to observe what they usually do during this time. Contact during the week with the employed participants and/or students was often limited to visiting them for observation in the evenings when they had returned from work and/or university. The visits were done to maintain the researcher participant relationship, thus finding out if there was any way in which the researcher could be of assistance to them. For example, if the participants needed transport to town because the researcher noticed that during the day taxis would be hard to find. Taxis were more available in the morning and the afternoon. In the evening taxis were also unavailable. Contact with the participants also occurred through telephone conversations which meant that even without seeing the participants, the researcher maintained communication with them. It was within this consistent communication process that the researcher called Snazo arranging that they meet if Snazo was not busy during the day. A request to which Snazo responded thus:

Researcher:	Hi Snazo, you good? Was just calling to check up on you and see if you are free to meet sometime today.
Snazo:	Hi. Thanks for calling. So kind of you. Just cleaning, doing the whole house chore thing. Dragging my feet cause, ndidiniwe [I am tired]. But we can definitely meet after lunch. I should be done by then.
Researcher:	Okay, then, must I come over to your place? It would be nice if we can get a nice spot where there's not much interruptions, if you know what I mean?
Snazo:	Let me come to you instead. I think that's better besides sometimes my gran's church people come here unannounced, and I have to make tea and all that so it might be difficult to chat. Hope that's okay with you?

are raised not to discuss sex, alcohol or engage in any social activities that are regarded as shameful. Respect in this context is reflected in how children would not talk about their involvement in these activities and how parents would not discuss these topics with their children. Although children are not told explicitly not to talk or ask about sex, for example, they learn from the way their parents behave to avoid this topic. One way in which this is done is by telling girls not to sleep with boys once girls reach puberty, without explaining what it means to sleep with boys. It is within this context that concealing details about social life is framed as a sign of respect for elders in the participant's context.

Researcher: Sounds great. We may just have to watch the time though so you aren't away from home for long in case your gran needs your help.

Snazo: Plus you know how they are. She'd be acting like I went to a man and end up giving me a lecture for days [laughing]. Cool then, let's chat when we meet. Thanks again for the call.

After approximately three hours following the telephonic conversation, Snazo arrived at the researcher's family home wearing skinny jeans, Levis T-shirt and pumps with cornrows (hairstyle). The researcher and Snazo picked up communication from their morning call thus:

Researcher: Yewethu [Hey you, in an endearing manner]. I hope you told gran you are coming here, so she doesn't spend the morning worried about your whereabouts. Semhle ntombi! [looking good, girl!]

Snazo: [laughing] As if I had a choice. She'd scream the minute she sees me opening the door and ask, 'iyaphi loondlela nathi silandele?' [where's that road going so we too can follow?].

Researcher: I sometimes miss those sarcastic remarks though. Grandmothers can be such an energy. But I see many things haven't really changed in Ngangelizwe since the time I lived here.

Snazo: A lot has changed to be honest, but a lot has remained the same. Remember Bra Jones? [pseudonym] He's still here drinking from morning until late. He is the life of the township that one. People come and go, die and are buried, but he's still hanging on. Sbu [pseudonym] and his crew are still here in and out of jail, but many boys have moved in from Ngeleleni [rural area near Mthatha], and they are the ones doing most crime here, so it's like that now.

Researcher: I heard Mzo [pseudonym] died. What happened to his dealings [drugs]? That man was really scary.

Snazo: Yep, wafa lowo yhu [that one died], he would stand there as if he is scanning every woman who walks up and down the streets, but I guess he was just making sure his boys were not using his stuff [drugs] instead of selling it. The family is still carrying on with the dealings though. There are also some boys working here, but I am not sure whether they are working alone or working for his family, but the business is still on. A lot of people died here, but some moved so there are many new faces.

Researcher: And how have you and your family been keeping up? How has life been?

Snazo: Life's hectic, you know, but good. Gran has been good. Busy with her church engagements. She is hardly ever home during the day because they visit people, funerals, weddings and all that, so church really keeps her busy. Then school for me. You know how frustrating school can be. Assignments, tests, classes and all that.

Researcher: Bittersweet, I suppose.

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Snazo: Yep, but it's not bad, to be honest. Well, when I reflect on it, it's not bad at all. Especially the times when I just look at the people whom I thought had it all and realise they are now stuck here, no education, no employment, then I appreciate that at least I am studying. Do you remember a girl who lived at the corner house? I don't know her name, but she was called Shorty [pseudonym], she is now a criminal that one and her gang. Others like Mimi [pseudonym] are just here drinking and not doing much. So, nje [like] it's not easy. I don't know how you have stayed at school for so long.

Researcher: I remember Shorty, she used to go to Zimele High School and was such a vibrant person. What happened to her?

Snazo: Life happened sana! [girl!].

Researcher: Hayi sundibroswer tshi [give me details, girl].

Snazo: Yhu! Where do I start? With me, it's everything ndikxelele [I tell you]. The course content at school is challenging, assignments and exams. Ukufunda akululanga tshi [studying is not easy]. Then there's life, relationships. Ngumgowo ke nalowo [that's another challenge]. Sometimes you think all is well kanti u guy akekholapho [only to find the boyfriend is not thinking the same way]. So, nje ugowishe ke ngalondlela [then you go through the relationship frustrations]. Ngapha yimali, yesana mandithi! [on the one hand its finance, girl!]. Nje [just].

Researcher: You seem to be going through the most, mntase [family/sis/sister are endearing words that are used interchangeably among women who share friendship ties]. Let's get some snacks so we can hear about u [the] guy. Then we can talk about your studies and family and life in general [both researcher and Snazo laughed as they went to fetch some snacks from the kitchen].

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This example of a conversation between the researcher and the participant Snazo reflects how the researcher approached in-depth interviews by starting conversations using mutually shared experiences. The researcher did this as it helped to establish a common ground between the researcher and the research participants as it created a friendly atmosphere within which sensitive information could more easily be explored. Thus, drawing from theorists such as Neuman (2014: 462) who maintains that in the field interviews, members express themselves in the forms in which they would normally speak, think and organise reality. Maintaining this atmosphere is significant in forming a pleasant environment within which the interviews occur. Hence, it is important to exchange pleasantries and maintain a good sense of humour while focusing on the participant's perspective and experiences. Gill et al. (2008: 291) shared the same perspective maintaining that when properly carried out, semi-structured interviews have the potential to provide rich information as they enable participants to share information that they would not often share with unfamiliar people.

One of the benefits of ethnographic research is spending extensive time in the field (Naidoo, 2015). This time is important in how it allows follow-up interviews depending on the availability of the participants. It reduces the pressure to have conversations that seek to cover every area within a short space of time. It is this benefit of ethnography that helped create a free flow of discussion as the researcher and participants could leave unfinished conversations for another time when the need for so doing arose. This perspective is shared by theorists such as Creswell (2013), Hoepfl (1997), Neuman (2014) and Polkinghorne (2005: 142) who suggested that one interview is often not enough if the researcher wishes to gain rich and inclusive accounts of the participant's experience. This is because, in the first interview, participants are often restrained as they reflect on whether their answers are acceptable or not. According to these theorists, a minimum of three interviews may be necessary to obtain rich data, with the second interview focused on in-depth experiences. The third interview provides an opportunity for follow-up and to seek clarity from the participant's accounts.

The researcher, having spent more than four weeks in the area of study, was able to engage in multiple sessions with participants through several interviews and lunch meetings. The researcher having been out of the field, returned to the field at a later period to carry on with the interviews and observations, a process that carried on for the duration of the data collection time that was approximately a year. Given the socio-economic background of the participants, the researcher paid for lunch so as not to incur a financial burden on the participants; a gesture of kindness. These lunches were informal occasions of getting to know the participants better. The lunch meetings were, therefore, significant in how they acquainted the participants with the researcher in ways that enabled the participants to see the researcher as a person, someone to whom they could relate. No data was collected during these lunch meetings. No recorded observations were made because this was an opportunity to become acquainted with the participants so they could relate to the researcher as a person. The researcher would ask if anyone would like to go out for a snack, and participants would choose a suitable time and place. Panarottis [4] was often the place they chose, stating its relaxed environment as the reason why they preferred the venue. Some of the participants would come with a friend while some would come on their own.

[4] Panarrotis is an Italian-inspired food franchise restaurant that was founded in South Africa in 1990. It now has franchises globally in countries such as Botswana, Namibia, Australia and Mauritius.

4.6 Group sessions in the field

Gill et al. (2008: 293) characterises focus groups as group discussions on a particular topic organised for research purposes. These discussions are guided, monitored and recorded by a researcher whose intention is to generate information on collective views and the meanings that lie behind those views on a specific subject. Sandewolski (2000: 338) similarly characterises focus groups as discussions where the aim is to obtain a broad range of information about events. Barrett and Twycross (2018: 63) subsequently described focus groups as a research approach through which the researcher is able to obtain views of many participants at one time. It is through focus groups that many people, approximately six, sit and discuss the same issue together. This arrangement often results in an enhanced level of debate, with the researcher able to step back and let the focus group enter into a free-flowing discussion while the researcher listens to, observes and gathers data. According to these theorists, focus groups provide an opportunity to gather rich data from a specific population about a particular area of interest, thereby expressing views, perspectives and meanings that underlie those expressions. Hence, focus groups are important in establishing in-group norms, meanings and processes.

In the study, discussions were held (See Appendix D for the guide to focus group discussion) within the characterisation of focus groups as outlined above. Three focus groups were formed for the purpose of the study, with each group comprising between three and five women. Some of the group discussions were unplanned, but the researcher used the opportunity in which the researcher found one of the participants sitting with a group of friends and joined. After joining, the researcher would listen to the discussions while identifying a way to introduce a subject to be discussed. Other discussions were planned based on current events that the researcher relied on to get the participant's views as indicated in the following scenarios. One is from a session that occurred on a Saturday outside Nomhle's (pseudonym) home where Nomhle was sitting with two young women on a bench chatting and laughing. The other is from a group session that the researcher organised with the intentions of hearing from participants about the prevalence of gender-based violence in young women's relationships Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha.

4.6.1 Scenario one: Nomhle and two friends

Researcher: Hi, ladies. You good? I was just taking a walk, and I thought let me
Nomhle: come see how you are doing Nomhle since I haven't seen you lately.

	Hay wethu ntombi [Hey girl] I'm good. Sihleli nje akhonto [We are just chilling, nothing much].
Researcher:	Is it fine if I join you? Nam akhonto [There is nothing] that I'm rushing to do endlini [at home].
Nomhle:	Not at all. This is Sethu [pseudonym], and this is Pinky [pseudonym]. We stay together in this neighbourhood.
Researcher:	Molweni bethuna nam ndihlala apha [Hi ladies, I am one of your neighbours].
Nomhle:	Sethu, Pinky, this is Sne. I'm sure you have seen her around.
Sethu:	Not really but kuhlukwazi [it's nice to meet you].
Pinky:	I think I saw you at espaza [spaza shop]. Not sure if it was you. You were with two kids.
Researcher:	It might have been me and my cousins. It's really hot today. Any plans for the weekend ladies?
Nomhle:	Yhu, singaplana ntoni sana umntu engenamali kangaka? [What plans can we make when we are so broke?]
Researcher:	Hay wethu [No girl]. Nomhle, speak for yourself [everyone laughing].
Nomhle:	Ndinyanisile njena yayazi nawe, umntu akasebenzi [It's true, you know] moss! [that it is!] unemployment.
Researcher:	So how bad is unemployment here in the township ladies? Makhe sincokoleni [Let's chat]. Nomhle mntase [family] please may we send a child to get us drinks from the spaza safa lilanga? [We are dying of heat]. Which drink do guys prefer? [Taking out money for fizzy drinks].

4.6.2 Scenario two: setting up a group session with Sasa

Researcher:	Hi girl, you good? [telephoning Sasa].
Sasa:	Hey sis, good thanks. Wena? [You?].
Researcher:	I'm good thanks. Ye sana [girl], have you been following the news lately? The killings of young women?
Sasa:	I have, hey, and it's really so scary and makes me so angry.
Researcher:	I was just watching the news and reading online, and I realised it's such a growing trend. I thought let me call you and see if we can discuss how things are since some of these women are varsity students. Imagine how young they are, Karabo Mokoena, Akhona, Njokana and the others.
Sasa:	Ey sis [Hi sister], don't even list them. It's bad. I did an interview on campus some time ago, where I was asking men why are we being punished for being women? Is it a sin that we are female?
Researcher:	I would really love to listen to the interview. Do you think it's a big thing in young women's relationships here elokshini?[in the township?].
Sasa:	Yho, ndikxelele [gosh, let me tell you] it's a problem elokshini [in the township] and on campus. Girls aren't free. Kubi, mntase [it is bad family].
Researcher:	Eish [colloquial expression of surprise/disapproval] now that you putting it that way, maybe we should just sit and chat about it. Is it possible for us to meet with others and discuss just sharing our experiences or what we have seen?

Sasa: Yes sis, no problem. That'd be nice. Maybe we can even give each other tips of what to do, you know.

Researcher: Let's invite two or more girls please and sit and chat about these experiences. Thanks for availing yourself. I hope your studies are going well and the family is good too.

Sasa: Studies are good just difficult; otherwise, all is well sis. Thanks for asking.

Researcher: I appreciate your time. Can't wait for us to meet. Will call you soon to confirm the time and place. Don't be a stranger, please. Send a please call or something. I know airtime iyanqaba [is scarce] and data never loved us [laughing].

Sasa: Yho mntase [Gosh family], the data struggle is real [laughing]. Will do. Thank you for calling.

As reflected in the two examples above, the aim of conducting focus groups in the study was to understand factors that shaped the lived experiences of young women within the township space and to explore lifestyle trends among young women within the township space. By bringing together young women within a group discussion, the aim was to examine shared meanings and how these shared experiences and/or meanings were understood either differently or similarly by those to whom they apply. These discussions were important in how they complemented the one-on-one interviews, thereby providing in-depth information about the realities of young women within the township space.

Although some participants were unwilling to share information at the beginning of the discussions, mostly using third-person examples to illustrate cases, they slowly engaged more as the discussions progressed. They tended to use the third person more when referring to activities that they felt would not be received favourably among the community as these could potentially produce judgemental attitudes. As suggested by Fossey et al. (2002: 726), focus groups are useful when the researcher aims to examine shared meanings or to learn about social practices among groups. Hence, with the aim of understanding the lived experiences of young women within the township space, focus groups were an ideal technique in which shared lived experiences among young women in Ngangelizwe were also examined.

With the above discussion in mind, the following section focuses on the techniques employed in making sense of and drawing inferences from the collected data. Qualitative analysis entails reviewing, synthesising and interpreting data to describe and explain the social worlds of those who are being studied. This process, therefore, rests on employing the proper techniques thereby enabling the researcher to understand how the heterogeneous subjective

experiences as captured by the participant's narratives knit together in ways that lead to the positioning of the social agents within the social spaces. Hence, techniques employed to analyse and interpret data are important in providing a comprehensive understanding of the study results.

4.7 Analysing ethnographic information

Qualitative data analysis is the process through which researchers examine data with the intention of drawing inferences. This process includes carefully scrutinising empirical evidence, simplifying the data and fusing it in ways that enable one to draw conclusions. Hence, theorists such as Fossey et al. (2002: 728) and Neuman (2014: 478) suggest that data analysis is aimed at providing answers to the primary research questions of a study. This process is guided by the aims of the study. Fossey et al. (2002: 728) propose that the procedures followed when analysing qualitative data are fundamentally shaped by whether the researcher aims to unearth meaning thereby examining data in ways that draw out the subjective meanings and experiences of the research participants or whether the research is aimed at discovery. Discovery-focused techniques are those where the aim is to establish new patterns and connections among data. Neuman (2014: 479) similarly maintains that through data analysis, the researcher compares the information gathered with other related evidence, eliminating some theoretical explanations while employing others, thereby drawing comparisons and contradictions. Hence, through data analysis, researchers can conceptualise, formulate and refine concepts that are grounded in data and generate new theoretical explanations.

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Creswell (2013: 182) maintains that there is not a one-size-fits-all approach to data analysis. Hence, qualitative researchers often have to learn as they engage in analysis, thereby tailoring the available data analysis suggestions to their studies. They do so with an understanding that data analysis is not a separate process but intrinsic to data collection and interpretation. This means that the meaning-making process does not begin when researchers organise their data. Instead, it begins as they collect it, observing the context within which the data is collected, documenting these observations. This perspective is shared by Fossey et al. (2002: 729) who suggests that it is essential for researchers to begin making sense of and examining their data as they collect it. They then develop an understanding not only of the social actions but how these social actions fit within broader theoretical discussions. Providing a guide to data analysis, Creswell (2013: 182), Fossey et al. (2002: 729) and Neuman (2014: 480) proposed that, irrespective of the approach employed in data analysis, conceptualisation and

developing new concepts, and examining the relationship among concepts are central to qualitative data analysis. All these processes should be guided by one's research questions for which the study is generating answers. These theorists provide suggestions on how data can be organised, coded and themed in ways that enable researchers to condense data into manageable and sorted clusters of information through which analysis can be made.

With the above discussion in mind, this study employed Creswell's (2013: 182) data analysis spiral according to which a researcher begins with data and exits with accounts of reality. A process that, although intensive, was mitigated by the understandings of the research that resulted from being extensively embedded in the produced data. Understanding the data, therefore, helped the researcher to be able to manage, organise and interpret it, thus indicating the extensive benefits of engaging in ethnographic fieldwork. Data was therefore analysed and interpreted using Creswell's (2013) method which proposed five steps to data analysis: data management – which entails organising data into computer files; reading and memoing – which entails writing notes of key events/occurrences that stood out during data collection; describing and classifying – which entails describing, classifying and interpreting the data, forming categories and building detailed descriptions; interpreting the data – which entails making sense of the data by linking interpretations to larger research literature developed by others, and representing data – which entails presenting the data that takes a descriptive nature thereby providing detailed accounts that paint a picture of the setting and the events within the township setting.

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Due to the massive data produced through ethnographic fieldwork, data analysis and interpretation was a repetitive process in which the researcher had to go back and forth to the data to make sure that the voices of the participants were not omitted. This process was important since the study aimed at providing the young women's understanding of their realities. Therefore, the researcher had to ensure the voices of the participants were sustained until the conclusion thus remaining true to the participant's accounts of their lived experiences. In addition, the researcher chose not to present the participant's voices in italics bringing both their voices and languages into the research. This was to recognise that both the participant's voices and languages (English and African) are equal. By not presenting the isiXhosa words in italics, ethical care is shown to the participants demonstrating that their voices and language, which are both African, are firmly located in this study. The meanings of the isiXhosa words are explained in brackets for the sake of clarity. The same is done for slang.

4.8 Lessons drawn from fieldwork reflections

Engaging in ethnographic research is both an emotional and physical experience. This was experienced in this study because of the commonalities such as gender, race, location of study and unplanned pregnancy experiences that the researcher shared with the participants, which often brought emotional strain on the researcher when the young women shared their experiences of vulnerability. In addition to the emotional strain, there were moments when the researcher felt the need to reach out offering advice, thus stepping beyond the role of a researcher into playing the role of helper. For example, in the clubs when the young women were intoxicated, the researcher would feel obliged to watch them, making sure they were safe. During the discussions, the researcher would sometimes want to advise some of the participants as they shared their experiences. At these moments of being tempted to intervene, the researcher reminded herself that the participants were not victims of circumstances and should therefore not be observed or listened to through a pitying ear but rather one that recognised their ability to make meaningful choices despite their challenges. It was this constant reminder that enabled the researcher to remain an observer and only to reach out when asked by a participant. This meant reaching out while recognising herself as a learner in the lives of the participants, thus not interfering with the power the participants had and the command they had over the shaping of their realities.

Engaging in ethnographic research is an untidy process that relies on the researcher's adaptive ability. Although theory may provide one with information that guides researchers, being in the field opens the researcher to the gaps between theory and practice. This means that a researcher needs to be mentally prepared for a challenging experience in the field. This is especially the case when going into spaces that may expose researchers to vulnerabilities such as crime. A researcher needs to observe the environment not only for the purpose of the study but to ensure that their safety is not compromised. This is one of the lessons that the researcher learnt as she visited the clubs in which occasional disagreements leading to potential fights would occur among patrons. Although none of the disagreements escalated as the transgressors would be chased out of the clubs, it was a reminder that the researcher was in a vulnerable space and therefore had to be cautious. A cautiousness that the researcher also had to maintain by making sure observations were restricted to the early evening. This took into account the warnings about the prevalence of crime in Ngangelizwe Township. It is with these understandings in mind that the researcher should always be prepared to adapt their data collection methods to the vulnerability of the researched and the researcher.

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The role of the ethnographic researcher is one that is fluid. Therefore, embedded researchers need to prepare psychologically for the flexibility of field membership roles. For example, the researcher sometimes played the role of a transporter, as she would be called upon to help when there was an immediate need. There were times when participants needed to talk to someone other than a friend, and they would turn to the researcher. These were talks in which the participants did not need any advice but simply wanted to have someone listen to them. The researcher, therefore, had to be aware of these changing roles while ensuring that she did not overly extend herself due to temporal presence in the field. The above experiences made it clear to the researcher that the field of social interactions is complex and filled with uncertainties. This entails that researchers do not assume certain fixed positions at the field entry; that they do not maintain them from start to finish if they are to make the most valuable use of their time when gathering data.

Exiting the field is a psychological and emotional process for which researchers need to prepare. The embeddedness of ethnographic fieldwork and the relationships established during this process makes it difficult to cut ties with the participants at the end of data collection. The period when the researcher was travelling in and out of the field may have helped remind both the researcher and the participants that the ties formed were temporary and made within the specific context of the research; this understanding did not make it easy to exit the field. The researcher had to gradually disconnect through less communication with the participants thus slowly withdrawing from them rather than maintaining an immediate silence as soon as she left the field. The aim of this was to minimise any emotional damages that could be caused by less contact given the close relationships that were forged through which participants shared experiences that they would not easily share with a stranger.

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4.9 Conclusions

The above discussion provides the research methods against which the results of this study can be judged. While these methods are framed within qualitative research procedures, they carry with them unique aspects that indicate the distinctiveness of the ethnographic approach in which the researcher engaged. The data collecting approach was drawn from ethnography, as indicated by the amount of time that the researcher invested in data collection. This unique feature of ethnography enabled the researcher to be grounded in the field in ways that created strong ties with the research participants. The researcher drew on these strong ties to gain an understanding of both the field and the lived experiences of the participants. This indicated

the distinctiveness of ethnography in how it enabled the researcher to obtain information that she would not have been able to gather if she was not deeply immersed in the field.

Ethnographic research was also drawn from in how it enabled the researcher enough time to conduct follow-up conversations through which she was able to confirm the information gathered during discussions thus ensuring correct understanding and interpretation of the participant's encounters.

Ethnography was subsequently drawn from in how it enabled the researcher to scientifically observe the field and participants while taking part in their activities through the notion of thrownness. Participant observation is important in how it gained the researcher an insider's experience into some experiences in which she would not normally partake. This participation enabled the researcher to subjectively experience some of the realities that she wished to study while also allowing her to observe realities of participants as they were negotiated.

By drawing on both participant and non-participant observation, the researcher was able to complement the information gained from the in-depth conversations with the participants that gained her rich data on the realities of participants. It is based on the above-mentioned research experiences that the study is rendered an ethnographic study.

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CHAPTER 5 'BARE' REALITIES AND ASPIRING FOR 'BETTER' LIFESTYLES AMONG YOUNG WOMEN IN NGANGELIZWE TOWNSHIP

5.1 Introduction

This chapter offers a descriptive discussion of the realities of young women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha, through an interrogation of the voices of research participants in this location. The primary aim is to provide detailed accounts of the constraints and struggles of these young women, their 'bare' existence, to meet the objective of examining the various ways in which their lives are constrained in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha. The secondary aim is to introduce these young women's successes in negotiating 'better' relationships thus revealing their agentic actions. Township realities often entail an intertwining of negative experiences with elements of the positive, hence the qualitative presentation with figures that offer a snapshot illustration of the negative and positive elements that characterise the women's realities. Thus, aiding the qualitative depiction of the complex women's livelihoods towards answering the research question that asks: what are the perceptions of young women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha, regarding the main issues shaping their lives and intimate relationships?

The discussion in this section begins with a characterisation of Ngangelizwe Township in Mthatha. This detailed description explains the participant's understanding and interpretation of their location's socio-economic features as shaped by availability and/or lack of availability of job opportunities, and poor infrastructures such as roads, schools and houses. These socio-economic features are discussed in how they influence the path to criminal activities that are prevalent in the area of study. The section subsequently focuses on the livelihoods of young women as shaped by social engagements such as clubbing that occur within the context of alcohol and drug use. These activities are discussed in how they underlie the heterogeneous realities of women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha. The discussion provided in this section is important in how it gives a clear understanding of the lived experiences of young women in Ngangelizwe Township thus providing an understanding of the environment in which the women's aspirations are generated.

5.2 Characterising Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha

Ngangelizwe Township is physically located about 2 km east of Mthatha CBD. Ngangelizwe Township is a social space that houses more than 70 000 people in roughly 12 800

households. A residential area that scholars such as Igumbor et al. (2011: 330) describe as a space of uncontrolled development where informal housing constantly increases, without planning for infrastructure, basic services and health needs. This is a context in which backyard dwelling increases as more people need cheap accommodation and are unable to afford the cost of the more formal dwellings, as will be illustrated in the following section. The discussion provided will illustrate the participants' understandings of the economic factors that distinguish Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha. These are factors deliberated on in relation to the structural make-up of the Eastern Cape Province, OR Tambo District, KSD Municipality and Mthatha CBD where Ngangelizwe Township is situated. This discussion examines the lack of economic opportunities in meeting the desires for better compared to bare life. The lack of economic opportunities tends to present itself in spatial congestion and its implications for employment and income generation, poor infrastructure, a path to criminal activities as well as alcohol prevalence and perceived pressure to conform. These are the issues that participants indicated as key to them in defining Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha.

Mthatha, wherein Ngangelizwe Township is situated, is a central point in KSD Municipality. This is because it serves as a popular connection to tourist attractions like Coffee Bay and Hole-in-the-Wall, in the KSD local municipality, and Port St Johns and Mbotyi, in neighbouring local municipalities, as well as a link to East London. Mthatha is described by participants such as Zaza, Babes, Sasa and Nomhle in the following way:

> At least in Johannesburg, there are mines and factories and all that. Here it's economically dry. Like no opportunities. No mines, no factories. I feel like it's a township in a town that is surrounded by rural areas that are economically dry. – Zaza (22, 1 child, student).

> There is really not much to do, you know. No jobs, that's what I mean. In the CBD, there are these Chinese shops and supermarkets, but those cannot hire all young people. There's already a lot who are sitting on street corners calling people to do hair and nails. What other jobs are there? – Babes (21, no children, student).

> I think generally, there is hopelessness among young people because they do not have jobs. So many people here are without work, both young and old. – Nomhle (25, 1 child, unemployed).

> When I look at the situation, it's as if those in government and those in business may be those with access to opportunities enjoy benefits alone, so there is a gap between them and the general people. Therefore, you find a few people who are doing very well and a lot of poor people. That kind of thing. – Asanda (21, no children, employed).

The participants suggest in the above statements that lack of opportunities is one of the defining economic factors that characterise Mthatha, which is the Central Business District (CBD) near which the Ngangelizwe Township is located. This is an economic condition that generates a sense of desperateness as young people struggle to engage in economic activities through which they can earn a living. This desperation is revealed in feelings of hopelessness and the daily struggles to find work that can grind on for years as described by the participants below: Hence, Nomhle states that generally, there is hopelessness among young people because they do not have jobs. This hopelessness that she links to her and her older sisters not getting work she described as such:

> My sisters and I have looked for jobs, you know. We applied when we heard they were looking for police officers, but we did not get selected. I went to town when they opened the mall looking for a job in the shops there and did not get it. They said they are not hiring, but the manager there said I must leave my CV in case they have an opening they will contact me. They never did. – Nomhle (25, 1 child, unemployed).

Soso similarly shared this view:

> I hope to get a job in one of the stores that would be better, but it's not easy to get that, but I am applying. In some places, they ask for computer skills that I may have to do. But, I would also love to do home-based care training. I have not decided between the two yet. But I know I will have to do one of them since I have looked for almost two years now month after month without any luck. – Soso (22, 1 child, unemployed).

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Sbongile added the following:

> I did a security course, but some places told me they either required someone with a driver's licence or firearm training. In this other company, the man who works there said the company hired more men than they hire women because of night shifts and that it is not safe for women. Spur, Spar these restaurants in town I have gone and they just tell you to leave your details, and they will let you know if anything comes up. Someone told me it's easier to get a security job in Johannesburg because unlike here, there are many big security companies there. – Sbongile (27, 1 child, unemployed).

Aphelele shared the following:

> I go to town maybe once a week or so just to check stores and speak to people and just give out my details so that someone can let me know if they hear of some available jobs. I Google for jobs like cashier. I look to see if Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) and McDonald's and these other restaurants are hiring. There is a man on our street who has a construction firm. He once got a tender to fix the road. I also spoke to him about asking for job when he has any projects, and he said he would let me know. My mother speaks to people she meets at work, and that is how one of my

> brothers got an interview for a job although he was not hired. We continue to look though, and Google as often as we can. – Aphelele (23, 1 child, unemployed).

The above practices of the participants are reflective of their experiences of unemployment that inform their views of joblessness. Opinions such as one expressed by Babes, who said that the shops in the CBD do not have enough jobs to cater for the unemployed young women in the surrounding areas. A situation that participants such as Snazo, Aphiwe and Asanda perceive in the following way:

> The problem is that many of those who live here Ngangelizwe and Mthatha are mostly the ones without qualifications whereas the ones who graduate from WSU, UNISA and other colleges here leave Mthatha and go to East London and Cape Town and Durban because they want better lives. – Snazo (21, 1 child, student).

> It's bad in a sense that the educated people from here are in all these big cities. They only come here in December for holidays. The people who live here during the year are the elderly, the unemployed and students. When people finish their studies, they do not want to live in Mthatha. Only those with no skills stay because for them it is not easy to find employment. – Aphiwe (22, 2 children, student).

> Those who have options prefer to live in places like East London, you know. Only those with less options are left here. That is why the employment situation is so desperate because most young people here have no options. They either did not finish high school or did not do well in matric and are looking for any job which is not easy to find. – Asanda (21, no children, employed).

Igumbor et al. (2011: 335) maintains a similar view that Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha is characterised by high unemployment with the majority of residents engaging in low-paying jobs earning them below R3 000. An economic situation that participants suggest is underpinned by the outward migration of skilled labour, leaving behind the predominantly unskilled. It is this mostly unskilled population that therefore struggles to find unemployment since there are not enough employment opportunities for them. This description is similar to the one used by Oduro et al. (2012: 281) who describes township spaces as locations of poverty where congestion adds to the societal member's experiences of disadvantage. This spatial congestion participants understand as shaped by inward migration as more unemployed people leave the surrounding rural areas moving into peri-urban areas that are closer to the CBD, which is Mthatha.

5.2.1 Spatial congestion and its implications for employment and income generation

The participants' view is that one of the factors underlying high unemployment in Ngangelizwe Township is that too many people from the neighbouring rural areas come to

Mthatha to look for jobs. Thus, competing for the same employment that people from the township are seeking, as indicated in the extracts below:

> In Mthatha, there is a lack of employment opportunities, plus there are too many people from the rural areas nearby. You just get too many people competing for the little jobs that there are and it leave out a lot of people unemployed and frustrated. – Sasa (21, no children, student).

> The financial situation is bad. The town [CBD] is overcrowded, and you see it more in the early mornings how dirty and worn out this place is. Too many financially desperate people without jobs going up and down during the day, looking for means to survive. Unemployment is real here, and people are financially desperate. People from outside town [CBD] can only come here for opportunities and services because Mthatha is a town. For example, there are no businesses in Qunu and all these rural area. Even in Ngangelizwe which is a township, there is nothing, just a few spaza shops and Transido[5] which is also not employing people. The garage here also closed down long time ago. We all depend on the jobs in town, and that overcrowds the town. – Yonela (26, 1 child, employed).

> You must go to town towards the end of the month and see how difficult it is to even cross the road because of congestion. It's really bad. People from Ncise, Corhana, Payne, Tabase, Vidgesville, Bityi, Kuyasa come to town every day to bank, buy, and all that. They come because in their villages there are no services. Think of all the youth from these places who want jobs. They come looking here, then there's the areas like Ngangelizwe, Waterfall, Khwezi people also wanting jobs in town. It's really that bad. – Zaza (22, 1 child, student).

> During the short breaks, you notice a little drop in numbers because students go back to rural areas for school holidays. That's when you see that many people who live here are from the rural areas. They come to live here in search for services like university; there are colleges in town where they upgrade their matric, and many of them stay here in the township because of the cheap accommodation. Many of them also come looking for jobs. They go home to the village during holidays. – Busi (26, 2 children, unemployed).

A similar observation to that of Sasa, Yonela, Zaza and Busi is shared by Mashiri et al. (2014: 321) who describes Mthatha as a rural town that is located in a district which is nationally designated as a poverty node. Mbundwini (1999: 27) earlier suggested that many unemployed people from surrounding rural areas flock to Mthatha in search of job opportunities. In most cases, these people are illiterate and unskilled and thus less likely to secure employment. While these people go to the city with a mindset that there are more jobs in urban areas, they soon realise that not everyone there will find employment (Mbundwini, 1999). A perspective subsequently maintained by Chireshe et al. (2010: 200) who suggests that Mthatha's surrounding rural population who mainly live in poverty and are uneducated

[5] Transido was a factory where artisans worked, but currently a few shops are functioning. The rest closed down.

aspire to live in town thus migrating to Mthatha in large numbers. A spatial congestion that is subsequently recognised by Tsheleza et al. (2019: 3) who describes Mthatha as dominated by high dense formal and informal settlements that house the predominantly poor and unemployed population. These settlements are predominantly rural with some that are peri-urban.

Aphelele subsequently raised lack of support for community initiatives, suggesting that it deepens the dire economic circumstances of the young women in Ngangelizwe Township thereby adding to the negative impact that occurs due to spatial congestion, as she indicated in the following extracts:

> There is no support received even from the government. I remember when a few projects were started to benefit women and to empower young women. Some older women here would farm chickens using their houses working together with younger women. They were promised space and resources to sustain the project, but that never happened, so the project died off. Then another group of women did baking, a similar project working with younger women but they never received any support from government since they were running the project from their own homes, so that too died out. – Aphelele (23, 1 child, unemployed).

The above views by participants suggest that in addition to the many unemployed and predominantly unskilled people in Ngangelizwe Township, there is lack of support for community initiatives which hamper attempts made by women to escape economic inactivity. Self-help projects in communities are an important mechanism for absorbing low skilled unemployed young women who are struggling to find jobs. Mashiri et al. (2014) maintained a similar view that Mthatha has a poor socio-economic and institutional system that hinders the economic advancement of its predominantly poor due to its inability to provide the services, resources, markets and information that they need. A view that Aphiwe shared as follows:

> The baking project went on for a few months then the woman whose kitchen was used for baking moved and went to live in Kuyasa. Other people went to live in Waterfall Park [nearby township], and that was the end of the project. A similar situation happened with the chicken. The woman continued with the project alone for a while. She eventually stopped selling the chicken, complaining about the difficulty of going back and forth at the end of the month to collect money from customers. I guess it was not easy doing the project alone than when she was doing it with other women because you then divide tasks when there are more people. Worse here because we walk or use public transport so for the older women it is not easy to go back and forth collecting money from customers because customers live in different parts of the township. – Aphelele (23, 1 child, unemployed).

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The influx of unemployed youth creates a need for cheap accommodation where back-room letting becomes one of the income generators in Ngangelizwe Township, which is linked to the ensuing overcrowding of the area. Furthermore, participants perceive spatial congestion to escalate criminal activities. This viewpoint is shared by Aphelele, Chuma and Yonela who stated:

> My mom is renting out backyard rooms, and she had to tell one tenant to find another room to rent because he was dodgy. He brought a new girlfriend every day, and he was just shady. When he moved in he claimed to be focused person, but we still don't know where he worked and what he did because he was often home with different girls, so my mom felt uneasy and asked him to move out. – Aphelele (23, 1 child, unemployed).
>
> The community once destroyed a house because the people who rented and stayed in the backyard were criminals who were blamed for selling drugs and luring young boys to sell for them drugs in schools, so they blamed lady who owns the house for allowing criminals to stay there. Those boys were breaking into houses and causing unrest. Apparently, they would rape girls too in there. – Chuma (23, 1 child, employed).
>
> A lot happens in these backyards. I could tell you about how my uncle who lived in our backyard would send me to call his girls in there: different girls, mostly young. And I doubt they all consented to whatever they did with him in there. But there are families who rent these rooms too. Our neighbour only allows people from her church to rent in her yard to avoid these things. My grandmother has two rooms. One was used by my mother, and one was used by my uncle. They are both vacant now, but she refuses to rent the rooms out in fear of getting the wrong tenants, so we just keep the rooms locked. – Yonela (26, 1 child, employed).

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Participant's statements suggest that while backyard letting serves as a money-generating activity for homeowners and provides affordable rooms to let it also provides opportunities for people in townships who want spaces to engage in illicit activities as indicated by Chuma and Yonela. Back rooms may be more attractive to those who often share these rooms with their friends, with whom they engage in illicit conduct. It is in this setting that Chuma alludes to a back room that was rented by criminals who were blamed for luring boys into selling drugs for them. It is within this setting that back-room residence may become central to criminal engagement that characterises Ngangelizwe Township in how it conceals illicit behaviour.

This perspective is shared by scholars who propose that township spaces are overpopulated spaces within which large numbers of people tend to share small, rented spaces (Fataar, 2007; Hunter and Posel, 2012; Mosoetsa, 2011, Swartz et al., 2012 and Xulu-Gama, 2017). These congested living arrangements are likely to occur alongside chronic poverty that

characterises households with low levels of economic activity, a scarcity of employment opportunities and a high crime rate. All these factors are thereby influencing the context within which desperate socio-economic needs drive various forms of economic engagements of those who occupy these social spaces. An observation that was made by participants in this study who suggested that Ngangelizwe Township's physical make up is conducive for criminal outbreaks as indicated in the discussion below.

5.2.2 Poor infrastructure - a path to criminal activities

Ngangelizwe Township is characterised by few tarred roads, and no street lighting as suggested by Akhona, Yonela, Snazo and Nono who said:

> Which police car is gonna chase after criminals in these kinds of roads? Already people who have cars struggle to drive here, so no car is going to be able to chase after any criminals. Tsotsis [thieves/criminals] know that they can run into passages and get away that easy. And at night, who will chase after them? That's how things are here. – Akhona (20, 1 child, student).

> It's not safe at all here. One Saturday morning, when I got out, I saw this man who was stabbed lying there along the street. – Yonela (26, 1 child, employed).
> Ask anyone, and they will tell you about crime eMthatha because we all know about it. Ngaru[6] is the home of criminals, especially eBhekhi. – Snazo (21, 1 child, student).

> Tsotsi's [thieves/criminals] break into homes but also when you walk alone in the passage [the pathway between two houses] that is where they rob people a lot. Like there's places where we know you don't walk there otherwise you get robbed and possibly stabbed if you resist. – Nono (23, 2 children, employed).

The above extracts by Akhona, Yonela and Snazo suggest that the spatial condition of Ngangelizwe Township is one comprising few tarred roads and no streetlights. The poor infrastructure of Ngangelizwe Township is similar to that of its CBD where road conditions have deteriorated and are full of potholes making it difficult for cars to traverse (Mashiri et al., 2014: 325). The above participants' perception is that these spatial conditions encourage illicit behaviour to thrive, leading them to perceive Ngangelizwe Township as an unsafe social space.

It is unsafe in the sense that they may be vulnerable to physical assault (such as stabbing) as indicated by Yonela. These stabbings sometimes occur in the context of robberies, particularly when one resists giving the criminals what they want as indicated by Nono:

[6] Ngaru is a shortened word for Ngangelizwe

> In our home tsotsis [thieves/criminals] came in two times, but I was not home. One time they came in the night through the toilet window. Another time they came in during the day. I do not remember what they took the first time, but the second time they took the kettle, iron, sandwich maker, small appliances that they could easily run away with. – Snazo (21, 1 child, student).

> You'll be walking alone, and you hear tsotsi [thieves/criminals] say, 'sisi [sister], just give me your earrings or watch or cellphone', whatever they want. 'I don't want to hurt you', and the person will be pointing a knife or gun at you. Young boys, you know. That's how these criminals work. You just pray that they do not hurt you. – Zaza (22, 1 child, student).

> My friend was almost stabbed. She was from Khwezi walking back from getting electricity passing Ngangelizwe High School. Those hostels there, when a boy approached her and asked for her cellphone. She says she did not give him. He said, 'sis [sister], I said your phone', and he took out a knife, and she gave him the phone. She came to me, crying and shaking. Now we only buy electricity from town even though the centre here is close, but it's safer to take a taxi to town than walk to Khwezi through that hostel – Soso (22, 1 child, unemployed).

Participants suggest that unlawful behaviour is further encouraged by the prevalence of drug use in the area. They link drug use to a desperate need for quick money, thus suggesting that robberies are the methods used by criminals to achieve this need. This is indicated by Yonela, Chuma, Sbongile, Soso, Zaza and Akhona:

> You get boys who smoke and use drugs and steal too. Those tsotsis [thieves/criminals] are always desperate for money, so they constantly are up to some trouble. – Yonela (26, 1 child, employed).

> The drug dealers here are often blamed for luring boys into drugs then turning them into criminals because once these boys take drugs, they do anything for money to get the drugs. Three boys in our streets became drug dealers suddenly. One died because of an overdose of drugs. – Chuma (23, 1 child, employed).

> Not far from where I live, is a house where the tsotsi [thieves/criminals] boys stay. They do drugs there. Even the ones who do not live here come hang out here and it's bad because these boys are watching who lives alone, so they know where to break in. – Sbongile (27, 1 child, unemployed).

> There was crime before. But the rate of break-ins and the rate at which people get mugged is just worse now. We could walk from church and go to shops after six in the evening without the kind of fear we now have. For instance, we no longer have evening services at our church because people were mugged on their way home from evening services. Some spaza shops close at five. That is why I am saying these boys and their drugs are a problem. I think the more drugs became easily available; the more crime also became a major problem here or vice versa. We had a community initiative that fought against crime called Anti-crime, but I don't know what happened to it because it is no longer there. – Soso (22, 1 child, unemployed).

> I honestly do not know which one comes first. For instance, one of our neighbours has two sons. They are both doing drugs and are tsotsis. [thieves/criminals]. The

> younger one is friends with a boy who lives across his house, and they have another friend who lives on the other end of our street. They are same age group. These boys used to go to primary school here in Mzimvubu. I don't know why they quit school, but now they are in and out of jail for housebreakings mostly. They are friends with a boy who lives down the street, who is using drugs. I think they became friends in jail because that boy was not their friend when they grew up. He is older than they are and has been in jail for a while, but he is back now, and they hang out together. The sad thing is that one of the drug dealers lives in our streets, and we all know him. I am not saying he is to blame for these boys, but I blame him at least for bringing his drug business here. – Nono (23, 2 children, employed).

> The three things that have certainly increased here are the number of clubs and taverns, the number of young people selling drugs and the rate of crime like robbery. –Akhona (20, 1 child, student).

The above statements by participants indicate the commonness of crime through activities such as theft and drug dealing in Ngangelizwe Township. Criminal engagements are so prevalent that community members have had to alter their ways of life in order to stay safe, as indicated by Soso. The participants suggest that the forms of law-breaking feed into each other as theft provides access to money which is subsequently used to purchase drugs that the criminals smoke. The participants blame the law-breaking on drug dealers who are alleged to lure boys into buying, selling and using drugs as indicated by Chuma. These statements indicate the prevalence of criminal activity among those who are engaged in drug dealing and using. This pervasiveness of criminal conduct makes Ngangelizwe Township a site of alternative forms of livelihoods in which alcohol use is also prevalent in the lives of both young and older people in Ngangelizwe Township as indicated in the following discussion.

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For younger people, there might be pressure to encouraged alcohol use to conform to group expectations as not drinking may result in being labelled as anti-social. This label can lead to young women becoming unpopular, losing friends and potential male partners. These experiences are referred to by participants in the following section. The discussion also elaborates on alcohol in Ngangelizwe Township, unearthing how alcohol interplays with the previously mentioned economic factors that distinguish Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha.

5.2.3 Alcohol prevalence and pressure to conform

According to the participants, the prevalence of alcohol is one of the social features of Ngangelizwe Township. Alcohol use is common among both the old and the young, with some of the older adults drinking African beer as well as other kinds of beverages. In contrast, young women often prefer to drink ciders and other more popular alcoholic beverages.

Among the youth alcohol use coexists with clubbing, making these the two most common social activities in this area as reflected in the following extracts by Nono, Akhona, Sasa, Asanda and Chuma:

> For some people, alcohol is a daily thing, you know. It not uncommon to see people drunk every single day. Then you get those who mostly drink on weekends. Taverns are hardly without people even during the day. – Nono (23, 2 children, employed).

> Alcohol is a big thing in Ngangelizwe Township. But it's a big thing in Mthatha too. That is why people easily open shebeens and shisanyama because they know they will not run out of customers. Because people drink here. – Akhona (20, 1 child, student).

> People drink here. People of all ages, even older women and older men, to be honest. You get the very old who mostly drink African beer and Chibuku [sorghum beer]. There are lots of them at Ndesi street where they sell that kind of alcoholic beverage. There's a place there where you find the very old people drinking, and you even hear them making noise when they walk back home at night. Then the youth who mostly drink beers and ciders and all these other drinks. Those ones you mostly find in clubs, shisanyama and taverns. – Sasa (21, no children, student).

> Drinking, for me, is just for social time. Like when you are unwinding on a weekend. My friends and I just relax and have ciders while we chat and catch up. Or we just go to a club, especially if we feel like dancing and have money to uber. – Asanda (21, no children, employed).

> I prefer going to a club because of the atmosphere. You drink nicely and mingle with people. But sometimes we just go to shisanyama with our camp chairs. Sit there, have some meat and drinks. You get to meet new people, have conversations about social issues and forget about your concerns. It's a nice way to relax and socialise. – Chuma (23, 1 child, employed).

The prevalence of alcohol consumption among youth in Mthatha was similarly noted by scholars such as Betancourt and Herrera (2006: 17c) who maintained that alcohol use is prevalent among adolescents in this area. Secondary to alcohol consumption is the use of drugs such as dagga, mandrax and cocaine among adolescents. The pleasure around social drinking occurs while young women are cognizant of the risks that are underlined by the pervasive criminal activities in their social space. Busi, Babes and Aphiwe indicate their awareness in the following statements:

> Eish, we drink. Well, most of us as young people drink just for fun. It's nice. It's social. You just have to be careful and make sure you have transport to come back home though because you cannot walk back, it's not safe. Robberies, rape, so you have to be careful. – Busi (26, 2 children, unemployed).

> It's more for weekends to me. We either go to a club or just get some wine and chill [relax] while drinking. Get friends together, play some house music, dance, and laugh; have fun. It's a social thing like that. I prefer drinking at home, it's safe and you don't have to limit yourself to a number of drinks. In a club you have limit

> yourself, so you are not too drunk, you keep your drink in your hand, so they don't put drugs in it. Keep checking on each other as friends just to make sure you are all okay. So, at home with friends, you are more relaxed. – Babes (21, no children, student).
>
> There are many places to drink, which just shows that alcohol is part of life here. Evenings when it begins to dim, that is when you hear drunk people singing and shouting as they walk back home from the shebeens. Pensioners drink too. Both men and women. I am not just talking about youth. You get older people drinking. That's what I mean when I say it's part of life here. The only problem is that there can be fights in taverns when they are drunk, and there are men who target drunk women you know. Like give you too much alcohol, so you are too drunk, take you with to the lodge and sleep with you. These things happen a lot, so you have to be careful; that is why it is not advisable to go clubbing alone. – Aphiwe (22, 2 children, student).

Busi, Babes and Aphiwe indicate that alcoholic consumption happens in a social space where young women are at risk from crimes such as robberies and rape in which being intoxicated may result in them being more vulnerable to these crimes. It is within this background that Babes maintains that she prefers to drink at home because it is safe.

The above perspectives show that there is a general awareness among the participants of the risks associated with alcohol consumption. It is within the overlapping of alcohol use and social risk that scholars such as Dhaffala et al. (2013: 1147) maintain that alcohol consumption is one of the underlying influences of violence in Mthatha. These violent occurrences lead to severe injuries through gunshots from thieves and communal gangs.

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Despite the awareness of the risks associated with alcohol consumption in the social context of having fun and socialising, there appear to be negative perceptions directed at those who do not partake. This is because they are viewed as not conforming to the notion of alcohol as necessary to have fun. It is therefore within this social experience that Zaza, Yonela, Sbongile and Nomhle state:

> As much as lots of people here drink, there's also many who do not. Drinking is like some fashionable thing. Sometimes people don't even ask if you drink or not they simply ask 'so, what do you drink?'. They assume that everyone drinks. Once you say you don't, they ask, 'so what do you do?' As if without alcohol, there is no fun. Anyway, there are virgin cocktails, so you just make sure you order it yourself so that you don't get the alcoholic one. Drink and dance and they see you having fun without alcohol. – Zaza (22, 1 child, student).
>
> I am used to the reactions, but it's sometimes irritating, you know. You get your friends asking you to taste as if you are missing out on something. In fact, there is that assumption that when you don't drink, you are missing out on fun. Then there is also that view that you are snobbish. Well, there are zero-alcohol beers now, so it's easy to blend in and avoid the awkwardness. – Yonela (26, 1 child, employed).

> You get different reactions depending on who you are with. Sometimes when you say you don't drink, people ask, 'so ungumzalwane?' [are you a believer/born-again Christian?]. – Sbongile (27, 1 child, unemployed).
>
> There is a perception that you are backwards if you don't drink. Like you are not keeping up, you know. People think you are missing out because you are stuck with old ways. I think that is where questions such as, what do you do for fun come from. Some people pity you because they think you are left out. – Nono (23, 2 children, employed).

The above views by participants suggest that there is potential social pressure on young women to conform to alcohol use. This social pressure may explain some of the high levels of experimenting with alcohol that commonly occurs among high school pupils

The primary purpose in the preceding discussion was to highlight the insecure situation of women, particularly regarding the struggle for resources in a context that frequently victimises them. A less discussed phenomenon is that of women engaging in criminal activities for the same economic reasons as their male counterparts. The following discussion explores the socio-economic aspects that form the background to the heterogeneous experiences of young women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha. Social factors such as intimate sexual relationships and first sexual encounters, safe sex, contraceptive use and abortion, infidelity and reasons for this, as well as alcohol and drug use in social relationships will be discussed.

5.3 Outlining the multiplicities that shape the lived experiences of womanhood in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha

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The young women's experiences are heterogeneous despite them living in the same social space and therefore exposed to similar spatial issues. All the women began their studies in the township's preschools and primary schools. Three of the participants moved to former Model C schools (which are schools that were previously white-only schools during the apartheid era) in Mthatha CBD to continue with their studies (from Grade 4 until Grade 12). Three more participants later moved to former Model C schools after completing secondary school (to begin Grade 10). Nine of the young women continued their high school studying in township schools, as illustrated in Figure 2.

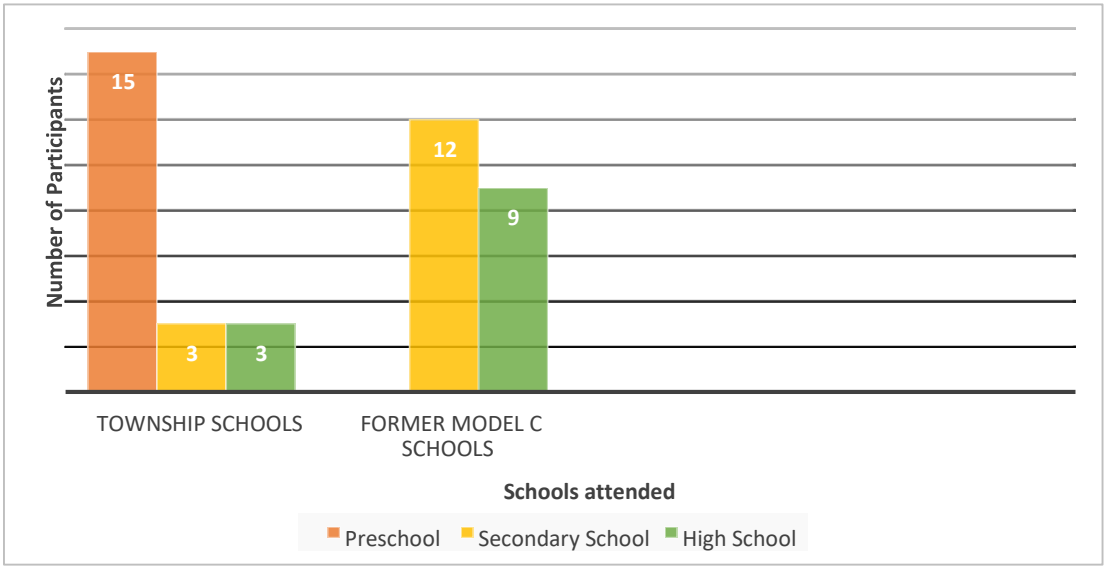

Figure 2: Number and school grade of participants who attended township schools versus those who attended former model c schools.

Eleven of the participants indicated that during the period of their studying they had failed and repeated a grade (six participants who attended a former Model C school and five participants who continued their studies in the township). While four participants indicated that they had never failed a grade as illustrated in Figure 3.

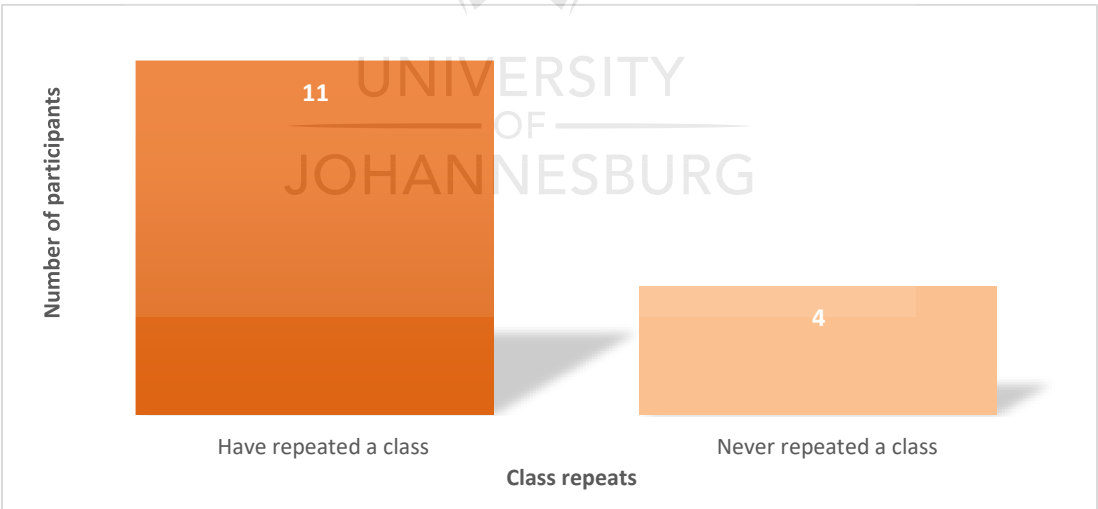

Figure 3: Illustration indicating the number of participants who failed and repeated a grade versus those who never failed

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Regarding the participants who repeated a grade, nine participants failed one grade (Grade 11), three participants failed twice (Grade 9 and Grade 11), and one participant failed three times (Grade 11). Nine of the fifteen women experienced post-high school education and training; Akhona, Aphiwe, Babes, Chuma, Sasa, Sbongile, Snazo, Yonela and Zaza. Among the nine women who experienced post-high school education and training, six women are still pursuing their studies further; Akhona, Aphiwe, Babes, Sasa, Snazo and Zaza. All of the six women are studying at Walter Sisulu University in Mthatha.

The participants are enrolled in a variety of degrees at different levels: second-year National Diploma in Internal Auditing; first-year Bachelor of Social Work; second-year Bachelor of Social Work; second-year B Admin (Public Affairs); first-year Bachelor of Social Sciences and second-year National Diploma (Human Resources Management).

Only one (second-year student) of the six participants, is a recipient of the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) as illustrated in Figure 4. The other five students had recently applied and were still waiting for approval. Of the five students who had recently applied, four are in their second year of study while two are in their first year of study.

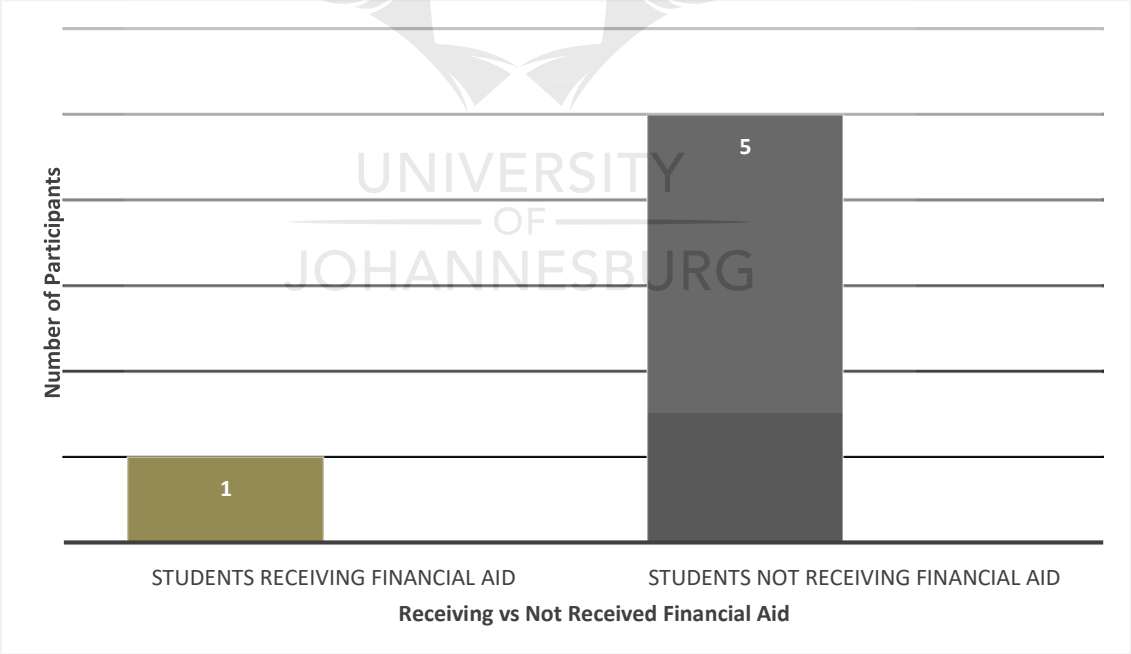

Figure 4: Number of study participants who received financial aid versus those who had not received financial aid

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The schooling experience of the participants that underlies employment and/or unemployment experiences is outlined in Table 3:

***Table 3*: Highest school grade passed and reasons/influences for continuing/discontinuing studies**

Participants	Highest grade passed	Currently
Akhona	1st year	Doing 2nd year
Aphelele	Grade 12	Did not pass well. Unemployed
Aphiwe	Grade 12	Doing 1st year
Asanda	Grade 12	Employed - retail store
Babes	1st year	Doing 2nd year
Busi	Grade 11	Did not finish Grade 12 - pregnancy
Chuma	Post-Matric Learnership and training	Employed -administration
Nomhle	Grade 10	Did not finish Grade11- pregnancy. Unemployed
Nono	Grade 12	Employed - retail store
Sasa	1st year	Doing 2nd year
Sbongile	Security training	Passed Grade 12 became pregnant. No money to continue studying. Unemployed
Snazo	Grade 12	Doing 1st year
Soso	Grade 11	After pregnancy stayed home to raise child
Yonela	Degree	Employed - finance
Zaza	1st year	Doing 2nd year

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5.3.1 Employment and the varying employment experiences

Four of the young women are currently employed. However, their working experiences are shaped differently by work-related circumstances such as salaries which determine what economic benefits they can afford. These women have different job positions, with different salaries, which are determined by their education and training. Various job positions offer different access to benefits such as medical aid, which make a big difference to their quality of life. These differences place the young women in different social statuses from which their womanhood is negotiated. Dissimilar employment experiences are illustrated in Table 4.

***Table 4*: Diverse occupations of the women and the women's perceptions of their social status**

Participants who shared the view	Employment	Income	Perceived social status
Asanda	Retail store - cashier	Roughly R 3 000 per month	Not poor just middle.
Chuma	Government - administrator	Roughly R 9 000 per month	I think I'm middle class.
Nono	Retail store - cashier	Roughly R 3 000 per month	I am in the middle. Not poor but not rich.
Yonela	Government - finance	Roughly R 15 000 per month	I'd say I am a middle class.

Of the four employed participants, only one indicated that her salary is sufficient for the entire month. One of the participants indicated that there are times when her salary is sufficient for the month, but sometimes it not. The other two participants stated that their salaries are never sufficient for the entire month. Additionally, only two of the four participants had access to services such as medical aid, with one of the participants having a life cover in addition to the medical aid. The other two participants indicated that they could not afford medical aid even though they regard it as important and wish to have it since they have children. The different access to benefits participants had regarding their salaries are illustrated in Figure 5.

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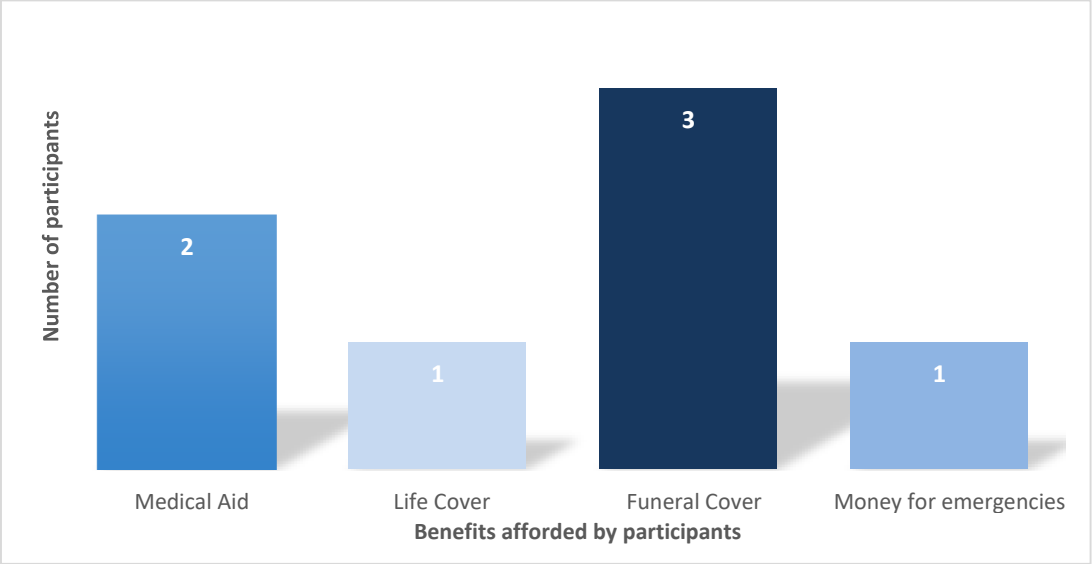

Figure 5: An illustration of services participants had access to depending on their salaries

5.3.2 Unemployment as a distinguishing factor

The lived experiences of the women are also influenced by unemployment that underpins the lived realities of the six women. Five of the participants did not study beyond high school, except for one who did security training. Unemployment informs their different experiences shaping how they perceive their social status as illustrated in Table 5.

***Table 5*: Unemployment and their perceived social status**

Participants	**Employed people in household**	**Perceived social status**	**Definition of being poor**
Aphelele	Yes (1)	I am in the middle class.	Having no means to survive.
Busi	No	I think we are not poor nor rich.	Having no home, no plan.
Nomhle	Yes (1)	I would not say I am poor. I do not know, hey.	Poor people have nothing. I eat, get dressed and have a home.
Sbongile	No	I think I am just getting by but not poor but not middle class.	Being poor is having no ways to get by at all.
Soso	No	I would not define myself as poor just not working yet.	It's being unable to hustle.

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None of the participants defined themselves as poor based on their view that they are able to hustle and have access to basic services. They do recognise the challenges that result from their current unemployment status. They perceive these economic encounters as resulting from not having a salary. These restraints are summed up in Table 6.

***Table 6*: Impact unemployment had on young women**

Number of participants who shared similar views	Perceived impact of unemployment on young women
7	It makes young women susceptible to crime like selling drugs, stealing.
10	It creates frustration that leads women into the blesser trend where they have sex for money.
8	It makes girls continue dating abusive men who take care of them financially.
15	Men use money to lure young girls into sex.
9	Sometimes girls become desperate and willing to do anything for money.
15	Young girls start dating old men.
10	Most of the side chicks (a mistress/a girl dating a married man) are simply girls desperate for money due to unemployment among other reasons.

Some participants indicated that they knew young women who engage in criminal activities such as drug dealing and theft. One participant indicated that she once engaged in a criminal activity, which was stealing intending to make money. Other participants indicated that they know about girls who live in the township and commit crime for money, as illustrated in Figure 6.

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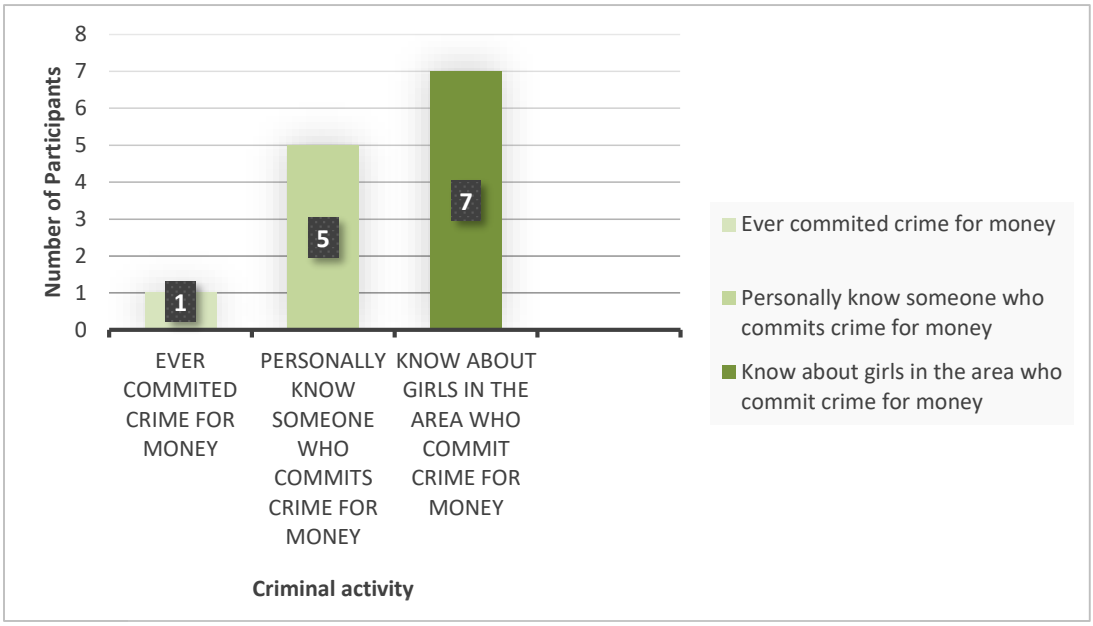

Figure 6: Perceived prevalence of criminal activity for money among young women

5.3.3 Sexual behaviour, safe sex practices and abortion

Most participants had their first intimate relationships when they were between Grade 8 and Grade 10. Their first sexual experience occurred when they were between Grade 9 and Grade 12. Ten of the participants had sexual intercourse for the first time with their first boyfriends, while six of the participants did not have sex with their first boyfriends, as reflected in Table 7:

***Table 7*: First intimate relationships and first sexual encounters**

Participants	First intimate relationship	First sexual experience	First sexual partner	Sex with first boyfriend
Akhona	Grade 10	Grade 11	Working	No
Aphelele	Grade 10	Grade 10	Working	Yes
Aphiwe	Grade 9	Grade 11	Working	No
Asanda	Grade 9	Grade 12	Student Technical College	No
Babes	Grade 10	Grade 11	Student Unisa	No
Busi	Grade 9	Grade 10	Working	Yes
Chuma	Grade 10	Grade 10	Student WSU	Yes
Nomhle	Grade 9	Grade 10	Working	Yes

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Nono	Grade 9	Grade 10	Student Technical College	Yes
Sasa	Grade 11	Grade 12	Student WSU	Yes
Sbongile	Grade 11	Grade 12	Working	Yes
Snazo	Grade 11	Grade 11	Student WSU	Yes
Soso	Grade 9	Grade 10	Working	No
Yonela	Grade 11	Grade 11	Student WSU	Yes
Zaza	Grade 11	Grade 11	Student Technical College	Yes

Participants indicated that they dated at least a month before having sex with their partners. All the participants' sexual encounters occurred at their boyfriend's household, either a back room he rented, an outside bedroom his parents gave him, or a house that he owned as illustrated in Figure 7.

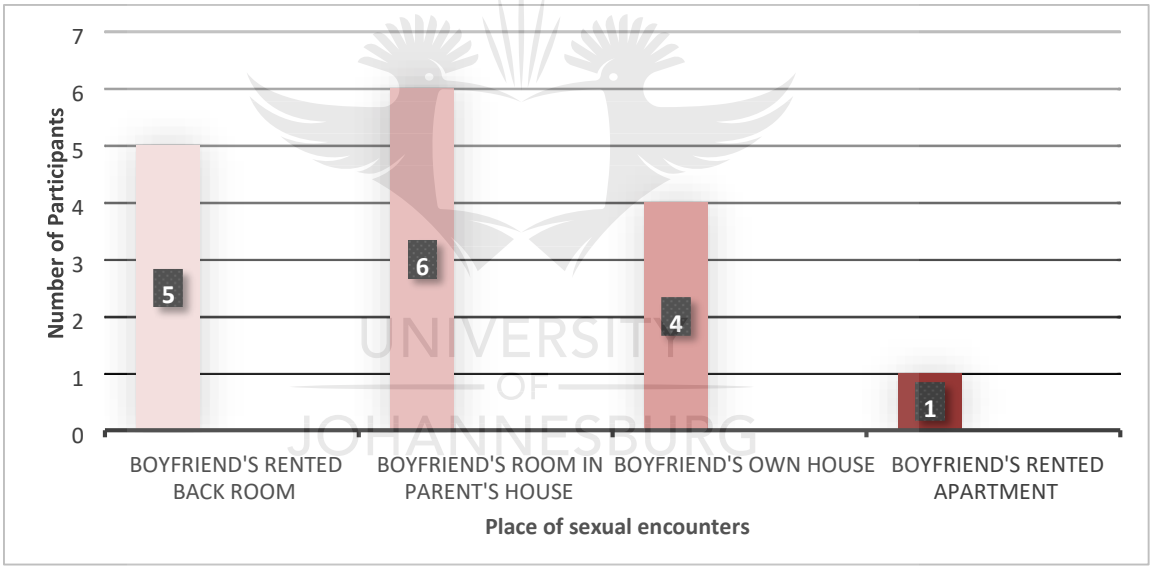

Figure 7: Place where participants had their sexual encounters with their boyfriends

Participants indicated that they had less knowledge about sex around the time when they had their first sexual relationships. Much of the information that they had was from friends and school. However, they felt that they have more information now from the internet, their experiences and their friends. Participants rely on this information to make decisions about safe sexual practices, as illustrated in Table 8.

***Table 8*: Knowledge about safe sexual practices and sources of information**

Participants	Knowledge before first sexual experience	Source of information before first sexual experience	Knowledge now	Current source of information
Akhona	Not much	Mostly friends	More	Internet, friends
Aphelele	Not much	Friends and school	More	Google and friends
Aphiwe	Not much	School	More	Internet and experience
Asanda	Not much	School and friends	More	Google, friends and experience
Babes	Not much	Mostly friends	More	Internet, friend
Busi	Not much	Friends	More	Experience, friends and internet
Chuma	Not much	School and friends	More	Experience and internet
Nomhle	Not much	Friends	More	Google and experience
Nono	Not much	Friends	More	Internet
Sasa	Not much	Mostly Friends	More	Internet and friends
Sbongile	Not much	School	More	Experience and Google
Snazo	Not much	School and friends	More	Internet, friends and experience
Soso	Not much	Mostly friends	More	Internet, friends and experience
Yonela	Not much	School and friends mostly	More	Experience, friends and internet
Zaza	Not much	Friends	More	Internet and friends

Most of the participants revealed that they did not use contraception during the time they had their first sexual experiences. A decision they indicated was due to lack of knowledge. They stated that they now use contraceptives. Participants prefer the pill and condoms as depicted in Table 9.

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***Table 9*: Contraceptive use and abortion among participants**

Contraceptive	Number of participants using contraceptives	Frequency
Condom	15	Sometimes
Pill	10	Daily
Injection	5	Every second month
Abortion	2	Once

Participants revealed that they used condoms sometimes. The use of condoms was influenced by the length of the relationship and lack of trust in their partner, among other reasons. This is illustrated in Figure 8.

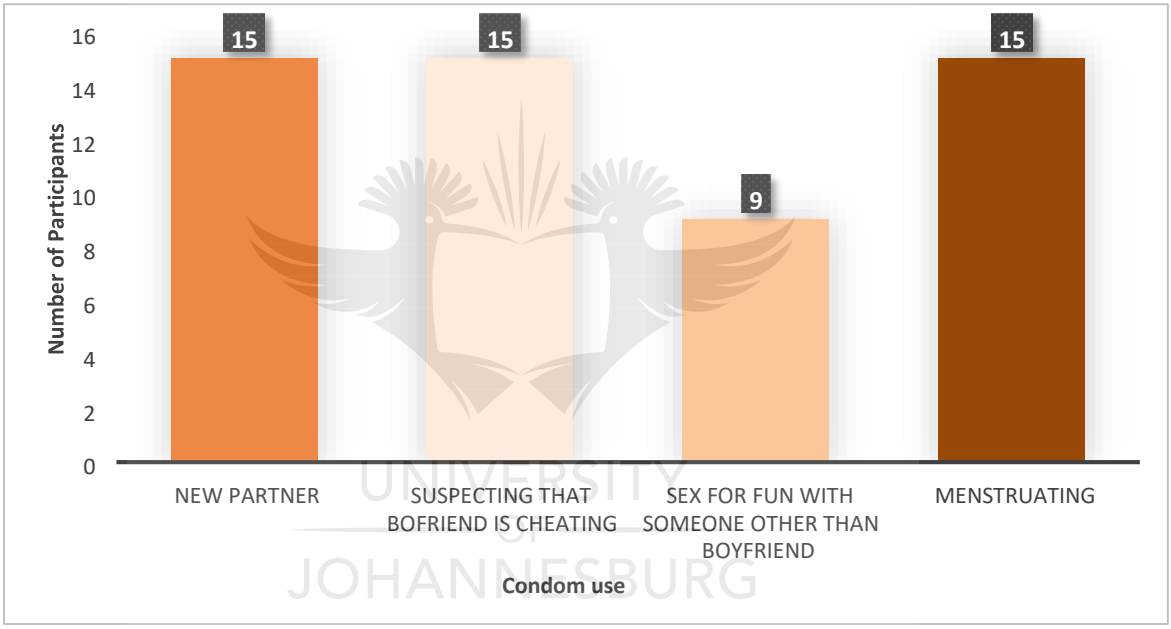

Figure 8: Times when participants had insisted on condom use

Participants indicated that it was difficult always to use condoms during sex because men had more power since they are the ones who wear the condom. The women felt that they instead had the power to take the pill, use the injection or to abort compared to always insisting on condom use. According to the participants, these options are easier for women since pregnancy happens to them as women. Below are some of the reasons that the women suggested underlined the infrequency of condom use.

***Table 10*: Reasons why participants found it difficult always to use condoms**

Reasons	Number of participants who shared similar views
It is men who put it on	5
The female condom is complicated	4
It is easier to convince a person you are not in love with to wear a condom than someone you are in love with	15
Men were given power to decide on condom use by popularising the male condom	6
Sex is not always planned	15
When you always insist on condom use with your man it sounds like you are not trustworthy	5
When partners do HIV tests and share their results it becomes a sign for commitment. Negotiating a condom thereafter becomes hard	15
It is hard to always negotiate condom use with someone gives you money	15

Participants pointed out that while intimate relationships were desired by young women they were also a cause of pain in how they exposed them to the unpleasant experiences of infidelity and abuse. Figure 9 depicts the experiences of abuse the women indicated having experienced at some point in their lives:

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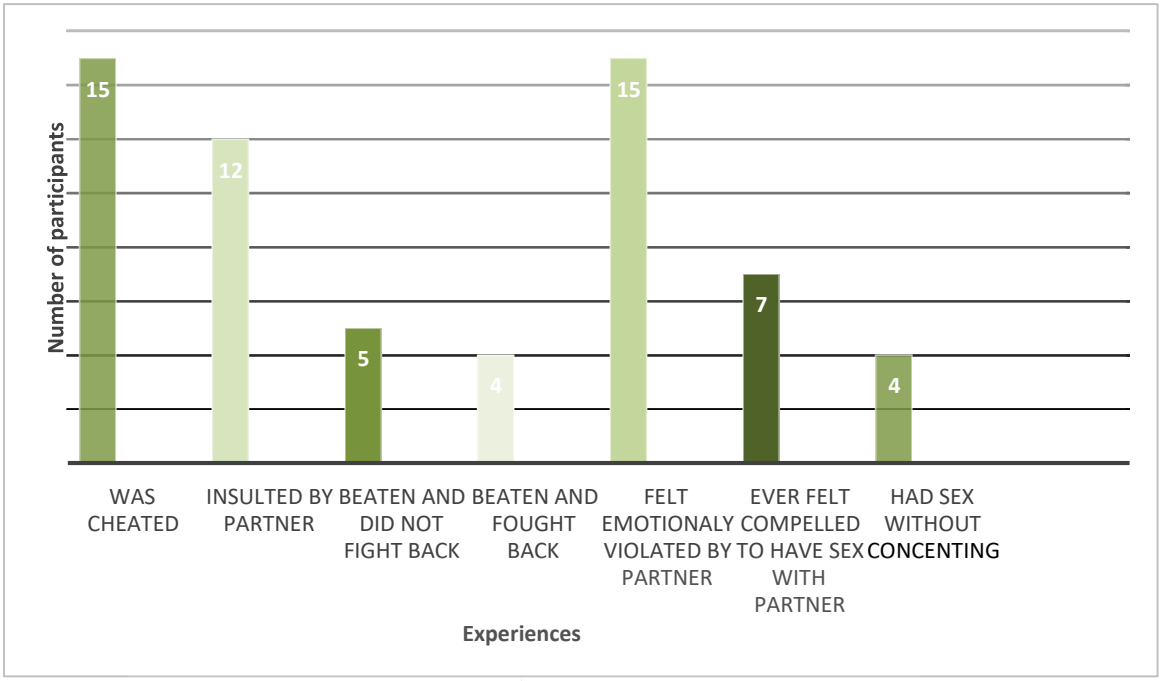

Figure 9: Unfavourable experiences of participants in their intimate relationships

Participants stated that both men and women engage in experiences of infidelity. All participants indicated that they have participated in a sexual relationship while in an intimate relationship, sharing some of the reasons in Table 10.

***Table 11*: Infidelity in intimate relationships and reasons that were given**

Ever unfaithful to partner that you were in a relationship with?	**Reasons for infidelity**
YES	
15	Sometimes it's having a crush on someone else.
8	When sex is boring yet you love your partner you cheat for sex.
6	Girls cheat on boyfriends who are broke (have no money).
15	Sometimes girls cheat because they are not certain about the partner's commitment.
10	When the guy who proposes you seems better than the current guy girls cheat.
7	When your man lives far and there is someone close that is always available to comfort you. You may end up cheating with him.

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5.3.4 Alcohol and drug use among participants

Participant's lived experiences are also shaped by lifestyle trends in which alcohol use is central socially. All the participants indicated that their lives are influenced by alcohol either through having friends who drink or where they themselves drink. Six (Busi, Aphelele, Akhona, Asanda, Babes and Chuma) of the fifteen participants indicated that they drink alcohol. In comparison, nine participants (Aphiwe, Nomhle, Nono, Sbongile, Sasa, Soso, Snazo, Yonela and Zaza) indicated that they did not consume alcohol, but they had friends who drink; an influence that is illustrated in Figure 10.

Figure 10: Influence of alcohol in the participants' social lives

Participants indicated that alcohol use occurred within the social space where drug use occurred, which was in social clubs. Alcohol and drugs, particularly cocaine, which is commonly known as 'coke' become widely used by young women who frequent clubs. Only one participant indicated that she sometimes used 'coke' when hanging out in a club. One other participant indicated that she had an interest in trying 'coke'. Other participants knew of drug dealers but had not used drugs. Others had friends dealing with drugs, as illustrated in Figure 11.

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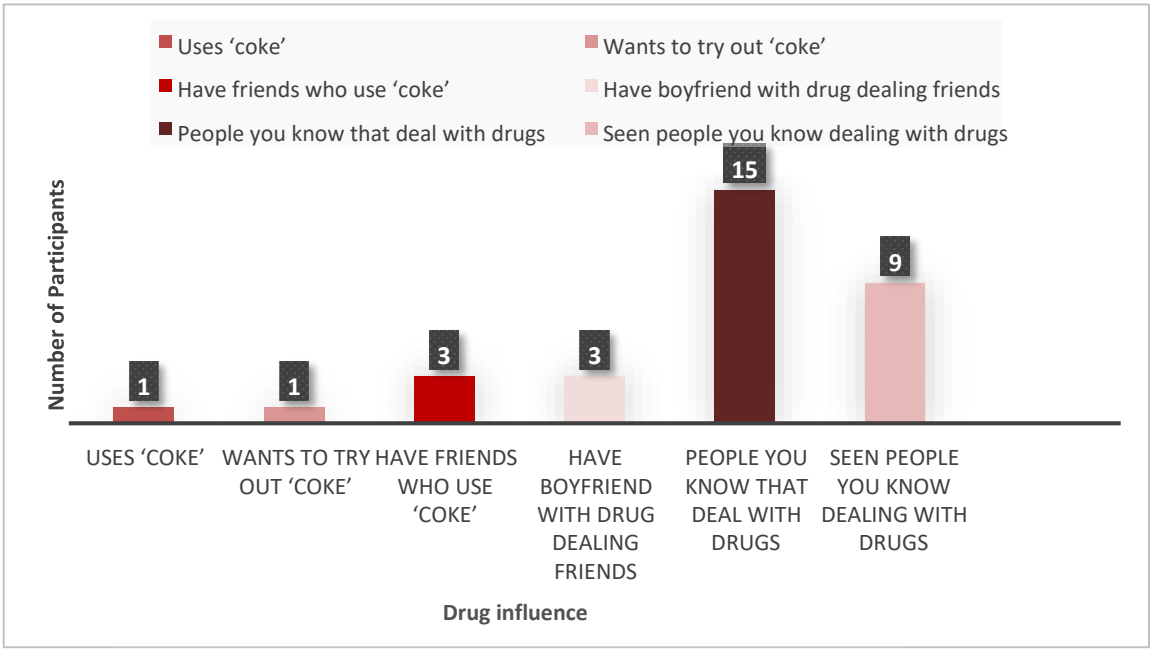

Figure 11: Influence that drugs had in the participants' social lives

Against this background, the following discussion explores how the lived experiences of the young women are negotiated. Their realities are shaped by issues such as: first, intimate relationships, early sexual exposure, teenage pregnancies and the experiences of motherhood; secondly; challenges to implementing safe sex practices, abortion as a means of escaping multiple pregnancy experiences, and thirdly, womanhood in the context of denial of paternity, the economic burden of absent fatherhood, messy intimate relationships and searching for ideal intimate relationships. This discussion will locate the young women's voices against other studies conducted on similar aspects in the same social space as well as other similar spaces in South Africa.

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5.4 Intimate relationships, early sexual exposure, teenage pregnancies and experiences of motherhood in young women's lives

Participants indicated that their intimate relationships began when they were between Grade 10 and Grade 12. These intimate relationships occurred in a setting where the young women did not have much knowledge about sexual issues, as many of them only received information on sex from school and their peers. Participants indicated that they had little knowledge of sexual issues when they engaged in sexual intercourse, as indicated in the following statements:

> At home we did not really talk about sex. I was told not to sleep with boys, though, but we never went into details in terms of why I would even sleep with boys. – Yonela (26, 1 child, employed).

> My sisters told me not to listen to boys when they say they love me because it is a lie. They said 'ubhadleke umthande ngengqondo, ungavuli imilenze' [I must love with my mind and not open my legs]. However, that was not really teaching me about sex. I never spoke to my mom about sex. – Nomhle (25, 1 child, unemployed).

> Sex is not something you just bring up, I guess. It's even awkwards to see a kissing scene on the television when there are adults in the room. Maybe it's an uncomfortable subject; hence they never bring it up. – Aphiwe (22, 2 children, student).

> Even now that I have two children, I do not talk about sex with my grandmother. It's always been like that. I would not feel comfortable at all. Maybe that is why she too never raised the subject. – Busi (26, 2, children, unemployed).

> I remember when I had my periods, I did not even know what they were. My mom said 'ungamithi ke' [which means do not fall pregnant] then she told me it's normal for a girl to have periods at some point in time. She then said 'ungalali namadoda uyawumitha' [do not sleep with men, you will fall pregnant]. That's all I recall of her sex education. – Sbongile (27, 1 child, unemployed).

> I suspect black mothers are general uncomfortable with the sex topic. I am saying this because sometimes my friends and I laugh about how our parents avoided the sex topic when we were young and still do even now. My grandmother never even mentioned the word sex in front of me. We even had words like 'igusha' [sheep] to refer to the vagina just to avoid mentioning the word vagina. We never talked about sex. We still do not. – Snazo (21, 1 child, student).

> I do not remember talking to my mother about sex. I know she warned me about boys. She used to say I must watch out because boys will get me pregnant and leave me then go marry girls who are not pregnant. We never talked about sex, condoms, contraceptives and all those. – Soso (22, 1 child, unemployed).

As the participants, Yonela, Nomhle, Aphiwe, Busi, Sbongile, Snazo and Soso, indicated there tends to be a silence in households on sex education. This silence results in participants relying on information from school as well as from peers. Participants use this information when making decisions regarding intimate relationships, as indicated in the following statements:

> I learned about relationships from my friends. We talked about stuff we saw on TV [television], we talked about the relationships we saw in the township because we used to see older girls going to meet their boyfriends. Boys always send young children to go call their girlfriends so we knew about these things and we would talk about them although we did not know in detail. We also learned a bit at school, so we sort of had some basics. – Nono (23, 2 children, employed).

> I think we discussed some of these things at a childish level, not with deep understanding. We talked mostly with the excitement of having a boy liking you and wanting to kiss you. Like as friends, we would discuss those things but not in an educational way. It was more like, 'so what do I do when so and so says he loves me?' Then we would advise each other. – Zaza (22, 1 child, student).

> At school we did learn about sex, just basic lessons but teachers were not too comfortable either, so it was not in a ways where we could ask much. I guess students also did not want to seem like they like the sex topic, so we would keep quiet and listen. – Asanda (21, no children, employed).

> I know that at school we did learn about sex, but I cannot tell you what exactly because I don't remember. It's not one of those topics that are easy to openly discuss. In fact, back then, my friends and I talked about condoms but not in a way that prepares you for that moment when you are in a room with your boyfriend. – Sasa (21, no children, student).

> I never really had sex education. I've watched shows like Soul City that were meant to teach us about sex. I heard about condoms, and we talked about them with my friends, but that was not sex education. – Akhona (20, 1 child, student).

Participants indicated that when they entered their intimate relationships, they did not possess enough sexual education to prepare them for sexual encounters with their boyfriends. Although some participants knew about condoms and others about contraceptives, the knowledge they had was not enough to assist them in making informed sexual decisions. Chohan and Langa (2011) maintain a similar perspective in that one of the main challenges faced by young women within township spaces is peer pressure, and young women not receiving sufficient guidance and sexual education from the adults in their households. This is a cause for concern given the high proportion of teenage pregnancy among high school girls between 15 and 19 years of age in Mthatha; noted by scholars such as Meel (2011: 39). Many of the participants in this study experienced teenage pregnancy with twelve of the participants becoming pregnant between Grade 10 and Grade 12. They spoke of their experiences of pregnancy as follows:

> I was in Grade 10 when I had my first sex that led to my first child with my first boyfriend. It was peer pressure because my friends had boyfriends, and they would have their talks about kissing and how it made them feel, so I wanted that experience too. My boyfriend had a back room and was a bit older so I would go there when he called me, and that was my first experience from which I got pregnant. I left him before realising I was pregnant. When I was in Grade 12, I had another child. – Busi (26, 2 children, unemployed).

> I suppose we just started dating and pregnancy followed. He was my first boyfriend, and I was in Grade 9 when we started dating. Sometimes I would sneak out when my sisters were cooking and pretend to be playing with my friends then come home

> before sleeping time. On weekends I would spend the day by my boyfriend, especially Saturdays. Sometimes me and my friends would lie and say there is a church service and we would all go to our boyfriends and come back the next day. I think it felt okay since I was doing it with my friends and we would talk about what we did. We all fell pregnant around the same time. My one friend's boyfriend went to jail, so my friend left school to raise her child. – Nomhle (25, 1 child, unemployed).
>
> I never planned to have a child. I was in Grade 10. It just happened. Maybe I was naïve or just didn't know much about sex since he was my first boyfriend. But I know when I went to my boyfriend's room, I was not going there to get pregnant. I was young, and he said he loved me and sex was how he showed his love for me. I would visit him after school and go home a little late, or sometimes when we play outside on weekends, he would call me to his back room. – Soso (22, I child, unemployed).
>
> I dated my boyfriend for a few months before we had sex. I was in Grade 10. We used a condom at first. Then as time went on, he stopped using a condom saying he trusted me, and I should trust him. I was comfortable with him because he loved me. A very naïve thing to do, so I fell pregnant. – Aphelele (23, 1 child, unemployed).
>
> I started dating when I was in Grade 10. It was boys from my school mostly but we never had sex. I had sex when I was in Grade 11 for the first time. We used a condom but not always, and I did not use any contraceptive. I got pregnant that year. – Akhona (20, 1 child, student).
>
> I first had a boyfriend when I was in Grade 11 when I started dating my boyfriend. Dated for three to four months before having sex. I just wanted to make sure he did not come to me for sex and that he loved me. We had sex when we both felt we were ready. – Snazo (21, 1 child, student).
>
> I started dating when I was in Grade 11. I did not have sex with my boyfriend until I had written my matric exams. He taught some lessons in our school but was not my teacher. Just an extra-curricula teacher that would come in, so we only started having sex when I finished my matric exams. – Sbongile (27, 1 child, unemployed).

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The above statements by the participants Busi, Nomhle, Soso Aphelele, Akhona, Snazo and Sbongile suggest that sexual activity is common among Grade 10 to Grade 12 learners, with many of them engaging in sexual intercourse with their first intimate partners. These sexual experiences occur in a situation where the young women do not use contraceptives and where condom use is inconsistent. Scholars such as Swartz et al. (2012: 32) suggest that for young people within the township space with similar backgrounds, sexual experiences occur in a setting where they are at risk. Vulnerabilities to pregnancy and early motherhood are often enhanced by lack of knowledge. One reason for this is that young women do not talk to adults about their intimate lives. They rely predominantly on information shared among peers, which is often incorrect, or at best inaccurate.

The participants indicated that in their first intimate relationships and sexual encounters, they did not have enough or relevant information. However, they stated they now have much more knowledge about sexual issues that they rely on to make decisions. This knowledge about sexual issues they obtain from the internet, their lived experiences as well as from their friends. This suggests that there is still silence on sex education in the participant's households despite teenage pregnancies, which are indicative of the participant's sexual activity. Participants talked about the knowledge they had of sexual issues as follows:

> I now know much more than I did back then, you know. Contraceptives, condoms and all that so there is no way I am falling pregnant again. I am done making babies. I make sure I take my contraceptives. I don't compromise on that one at all. – Nono (23, 2 children, employed).

> I use an injection because I want no mistakes at all. I'd rather make an excuse and lie than to visit a man before I go for my injection. I learned my lesson. – Zaza (22, 1 child, student).

> I guess growing up teaches you a lot, hey and now there is the internet which also helps with all the information. Although I do not talk to adults about sex, but I am able to access information. Also discussing with friends, you know. The way we discuss now is not like we did when we were younger because experience has taught us a thing or two. – Soso (22, 1 child, unemployed).

> I use Google for information. It helps even when you want to check things that you are not comfortable sharing with friends. I use it a lot. But I also feel like girls are more empowered now. They are not as naïve and gullible, so when we talk as friends you always learn, and I like that. – Babes (21, no children, student).

> Internet is the way to go. I use it to verify information. Like this other time, I heard about the patch. I checked the internet to see the side effects before trying it out. I think the internet empowers women in that sense because now no one has to wait for anyone to teach them about sex. You do your own research. – Nomhle (25, 1 child, unemployed).

> I believe I know much more than I did because of the internet. Like, people even share their experiences, and you get all that knowledge. And there is no judgement, you know because sometimes people judge girls who want to know more about sex as if you are promiscuous. So, the internet is good because you search without anyone knowing. – Aphelele (23, 1 child, unemployed).

The above statements by the participants' Nono, Zaza, Soso, Babes, Nomhle and Aphelele indicate that they have since gained more sex knowledge and that they continue to seek knowledge based on which they can make informed sexual decisions. The knowledge that they access mainly from the internet empowers them while their identities remain hidden, which protects them from being judged as unrestrained for showing interest in sex. A similar view is shared by scholars such as Buhi et al. (2009: 101), who maintain that the internet has

become a preferred source of health information among youth. The internet is used to learn about health topics that they fear talking about to parents, educators and other adults. Buhi et al. (2009: 104) suggest that many students use Google to ask questions about contraceptives and their side effects, unprotected sexual intercourse and emergency contraception, as well as locating places where they can undergo testing such as for HIV without meeting people whom they know. A similar view is shared by Bankole et al. (2007: 36), Lim et al. (2014: 1006) and Nwagwu (2007) who maintain that girls are more comfortable accessing sexual health information via websites.

5.4.1 Challenges to implementing safe sex practices and abortion towards escaping multiple pregnancy experiences

Bankole et al. (2007) maintain that while it is important to appreciate the use of the internet to access sexual health information among young people, there is a need to ensure that they access accurate, in-depth information that they can use effectively. This suggestion is important because although participants in the study have indicated that they now have more knowledge on sexual issues, they also reflected that they experience challenges in applying some of the knowledge, particularly the consistent use of condoms to ensure safe sex. A difficulty they shared in the following way:

> It's not easy to always insist on condoms, you know. Of course in the beginning, when you get to know each other, you use it. Then you go test when you see that the relationship is becoming serious and he is committed. Thereafter it's not easy to use a condom at all. – Asanda (21, no children, employed).

> I guess mostly because sex happens anytime. Sometimes condoms are not there, and you cannot say let's first go to the shop to get a condom and come back. That would just kill the mood. – Aphelele (23, 1 child, unemployed).

> For me, it's just not easy to always insist on a condom in a relationship. Not just for me as a woman but for my partner too. I would find it odd for him to always look for a condom before sex. I'd wonder if he does not trust me or if I must not trust him. Once you know each other's HIV status, the condom becomes a turn off during sex. – Busi (26, 2 children, unemployed).

> I think condom use depends on the kind of a relationship. I don't use condoms every time. I think it's just easier to insist on a condom with a crush or one-night stand or that casual relationship. But with your partner, it's not easy unless you suspect that he is unfaithful. Then you can put up an argument and say you won't have sex if he doesn't wear a condom. Even then, he will resist. It's not like he will just go get one. Sasa (21, no children, student).

> I don't know hey, but it's just not possible to expect people to always use them. For many reasons. If my partner always had a condom, I would suspect he is cheating even if he would claim it's to make sure we do not run out of condoms. It raises

> eyebrows to see someone who always have a condom. Makes you feel like they are always thinking of having sex. Can you imagine if my boyfriend found condoms in my handbag? He would never trust me again. – Zaza (22, 1 child, student).

> In my case money compromised condom use even if the relationships were not serious. When you have a casual partner who spoils you with money and gifts, you just can't insist on safe sex every time. Maybe if he is married, you can play the family card and say, 'but, babe [love] what if I get pregnant? I don't want to ruin things for you'. But, even that will not work for long because he will tell you to use contraceptives instead. – Chuma (23, 1 child, employed).

The above statements by participants show that sometimes there is a gap between accessing and implementing knowledge on issues about sex. A gap that is caused by common perceptions such as associating condom use with new relationships and relationships that are unstable. These perceptions create negative judgements towards partners who may want to use condoms consistently. This view is shared by scholars such as Mash et al. (2010: 3) who maintain that condom use is not only a question of safe sex practice but also about gendered power struggles, perceptions of sexual pleasure as well as views of intimacy and trust. These social constructions have far-reaching consequences on young women's decisions to encourage the use of condoms. These perceptions and their reach are indicated in the above statements where participants' condom use tends to be influenced by factors such as condom availability when sexual intercourse occurs, the type and length of a relationship as well as the context in which the sexual experience occurs. These perceptions indicate the complexities that underlie the inconsistent use of condoms in some of the young women's sexual relationships.

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The above-mentioned perceptions are concerning given the importance of condom use not only as a form of contraceptive but a safe sex measure to prevent the spread of sexually transmitted infections. For example, approximately 61 400 people in the King Sabata Dalindyebo local municipality in which Mthatha is situated were HIV positive in the 2016 period. This is roughly 12.44% of the local municipality's total population (King Sabata Dalindyebo Local Municipality: IDP, 2017/18-2022: 76). It is within the inconsistent use of condoms among participants that the young women may be vulnerable to multiple pregnancies. This experience was shared by the participants Yonela, Akhona, Sbongile, Nono and Nomhle who stated the following:

> I decided to stop using the injection because it was making me overweight. I took a break just to get it off my body before starting on the pill. I didn't expect to fall pregnant because I thought there is a window period of safety. When I went to begin with my pill they said I must do a test and I realised I was pregnant. I told my friend

> and asked her to help me find a place where I could go abort. We found it, and she went with me to do the abortion. – Yonela (26, 1 child, employed)
>
> I ran out of pills [contraceptives] but was not expecting my boyfriend to fetch me. We spent a few days at his house, and I suspect that is when I got pregnant. I realise when I did not have my menses and went to test. I decided to abort because I won't go down that route again. I refuse to have second child before finishing my studies. My experience has taught me to put my future ahead of a relationship. – Akhona (20, 1 child, student).
>
> I haven't had an abortion, but I would definitely do it if I would get pregnant again. Unless I am married and working. There is no way I am having another child under my current financial state. – Sbongile (27, 1 child, unemployed).
>
> I am not having children again. Two is enough. If I become pregnant, my partner would have to forgive me because I would have an abortion. That's what I decided on after my second child. – Nono (23, 2 children, employed).

As indicated in the participants' statements above the young women are able to use the information that they access online to make decisions that protect them from falling victims to unplanned pregnancies that earlier affected them. This decision making is important in how it enables the young women to prioritise their plans for their future when making decisions as indicated by Akhona, who chose to have an abortion.

The decisions that the young women make are taken in a social context where alcohol and drug use are prevalent and intertwined with experiences of pleasure. Alcohol and drug use pose a risk as sometimes the women are exposed to varying dangers that are captured in the following statements by participants:

> Clubbing is what my friends and I do for fun. We drink, do 'coke' but just when we are clubbing. We don't do 'coke' outside of the club. We hang out and dance. That's the kind of social vibe that is common here. – Aphelele (23, 1 child, unemployed).
>
> On weekends I drink with friends, and we go to clubs and hang out with guys. I don't do 'coke' because my boyfriend did not approve. Moreover, you must be careful who you drink with because some guys are there to find girls they can go have sex with. – Busi (26, 2 children, unemployed).
>
> Some men are not there to drink and socialise; some are drug dealers looking for easy targets. Some are rapists and sex freaks looking for easy unaware girls to take advantage of. Some people are there to steal from people who are not aware. So you must have you eyes open. Other than that, clubbing is, and drinking is a nice time to have fun and relax. – Asanda (21, no children, employed).
>
> You just have to watch out and not just allow any man to buy you booze [alcohol]. Don't be desperate like that; otherwise, you become an easy target to these men. – Chuma (23, 1, child, employed).

> Well, I still go clubbing even though I do not drink. I go with my friends. Just don't allow anyone to pressure you into trying alcohol. If you want to explore, don't do it in the club with strangers whose intentions you do not know. They tell you try this, try that. But I don't. – Yonela (26, 1, child employed).

> Sometimes you get pressure from your friends who want you to taste whatever they are drinking. Sometimes you get pressure from men you meet there who want you to try out alcohol. – Zaza (22, 1 child, student).

The above statements by Aphelele, Busi, Asanda, Chuma, Yonela and Zaza suggest that the pursuit of pleasure among young women occurs in a social environment characterised by vulnerability to social pressure and sexual violence. This is social pressure that women who do not consume alcohol also receive either from friends or men they meet in the clubs. The sexual violence that intoxicated women are prone to is due to their awareness being compromised that may result from excessive alcohol consumption.

5.4.2 Womanhood in the context of denial of paternity, the economic burden of absent fatherhood, messy intimate relationships and searching for ideal intimate relationships.

According to Ncongwane (2018: 26), young women face varying challenges from teenage pregnancies. These burdens are shaped by issues such as acceptance or denial of paternity by the child's father, and the availability of family support by the young mother's household members, both of which impact on how young women will adjust to parenthood. Similarly, Nkani and Bhana (2016: 2) maintain that denials of paternity common among teenage pregnancies lead to full financial and emotional responsibility that comes with childcare being shifted towards the young woman and her family. A similar pattern is noticed in the motherhood experiences of the participants where only two of the twelve receive financial support from the children's father, as indicated in the following statements:

> He denied paternity and told me these are not his children. I got tired of his belittling insults and took the child, one child who lives with me, to him. I told him to go do a paternity test and bring back the test results. He did not do that because he knows it's his child. He simply bought clothes and food for the child and brought the child back to me. He still sends me the insults now and again, but he sends the money. He knows he is the father. My sister advised me to stop talking to him and just go to court at once and apply for maintenance, and I am planning to do that. – Aphiwe (22, 2 children, student).

> After breaking up with him, I realised I was pregnant. When I told him, he said I must go tell that to whomever I went to when I left him. So, basically, the child is not his hence he does not support. – Chuma (23, 1 child, employed).

> While we were still together, I received messages telling me to stay away from him because his girlfriend does not appreciate me meddling with her man. I thought it was a text accidentally sent because I was the girlfriend. I called, and he said I must stop

> calling him. The next time I called a woman answered his cellphone. I just asked her to tell him I have given birth to his child and dropped the phone. I later sent a text with the child's photo, and he never responded. I see him sometimes, but we do not talk and not even once did he ask about the child. – Nono (23, 2 children, employed).

> When I told him I was pregnant, his answer was, 'so what are you going to do?' I was shocked, and I thought he was joking, but I noticed the change of behaviour. He stopped calling. When I called, he said he was busy, and he slows withdrew from me. One day he told me he is taking a break from the relationship, and that is how it ended. I decided to let him go. I sent a message telling him I had delivered the child and he never responded, so I let it go. I don't get money or anything from him. – Nomhle (25, 1 child, unemployed).

> My child's father and I broke up before I had my child. He claimed that he did not make me pregnant. By the time I had my child, we were no longer on speaking terms. He never even saw the child, but I do send him random photos so that he can see the child even though he does nothing for my child. – Yonela (26, 1 child, employed).

It is against this common experience of denial of paternity, where Busi shares a different experience since, unlike the other women, her children's fathers did not deny paternity. They send her money to care for the children, as reflected in the statement below:

> They do maintain their children, but it ends there. There is no relationship. They just send money, but it is okay. At least they do that without me having to fight much for it. – Busi (26, 2 children, unemployed).

Denial of paternity occurs within a broader setting of messy intimate relationships. This is a common setting where intimate partners engage in infidelity. All the participants (with or without children) realised that their sexual partners had other girlfriends while they were in an intimate relationship with them. An insight that participants shared in the following statements:

> One day I got to his place and found him with a girl. They were there sitting on the bed door slightly ajar. I knocked and pushed the door. It is not something that one prepares for, you know. – Chuma (23, 1 child, employed).

> He cheated on me so, and he did it with a girl not far from my home. It hurts more when the girl is from your area because it shows he has no respect for you. – Akhona (20, 1 child, student).

> I used to receive calls. Girls telling me to leave her man alone. Each time I told him about it, he brushed it off, claiming it is a wrong number. Until this girl called and I was sitting with him. I put it on a loudspeaker so he could hear. I asked him, please respond to her. He admitted it is other girlfriend. – Sbongile (27, 1 child, unemployed).

> Boys especially dating someone your age is just too messy because they are so disrespectful towards women. You end up fighting. They cheat, they lie they have no money, so you go through so much pain for nothing. – Asanda (21, no children, employed).

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> I dated this boy who was my age, and he had so many girlfriends, and whenever I tried to talk to him about it, he would just be so rude. I got tired. I tried a couple of boys my age, and I kept on experiencing abuse and disrespect. – Babes (21, no children, student).

> My ex-boyfriend used to be so abusive, especially when I would ask if he is seeing someone else. He would beat me as if asking is sin. He would expect me to have sex with him whenever he wanted me to but was never available when I wanted to be with him. He was same age as me. My second boyfriend was violent too. He would want me whenever and demand sex even if I did not want, but he would ignore me thereafter. – Sasa (21, no children, student).

The above statements by the participants indicate that intimate relationships are intertwined with the unpleasant experiences of infidelity, emotional and physical abuse. These observations are also made by scholars such as Swartz et al. (2016: 2) and Wood and Jewkes (1997: 45) who maintain that although young people's sexual relationships can be a simultaneously age appropriate means of self-expression and development these relationships are not without risks.

These risks are indicated by multiple partnerships that tend to be the norm for many men. Swart et al. (2016: 4) maintain that male sexuality is unrestrained. It is normative for men to cheat in relationships and for them to demand sex even if their partners are unwilling and say no, which is rape. These young women are exposed to and experience rape in the townships given the high rape statistic, thus seeing violence from men as normative. Evidence of rape statistics bearing this out are as follows: approximately 250 out of every 100 000 women were victims of sexual offences compared to 120 out of every 100 000 men in the period of 2016–17 in South Africa. A case in which roughly 80% of the reported sexual offences were rape (Stats SA, 2018: 8). Scholars such as Hurst (2009: 249) thus suggest that the predominance of violence within intimate relationships as reflected in the young women's lived experiences should not be separated from the performances of masculinities within township spaces where structural limitations overlap in ways that tend to reinforce socio-economic forms. However, although infidelity is commonly associated with men, participants indicated that they too engaged in other relationships while in their primary intimate relationships as indicated in the following statements by Aphiwe, Busi, Akhona, Babes, Nono and Soso:

> I think it just happened. I did not plan. The guy was friendly, caring and always there for me to talk to so we ended up getting closer, and one day we had sex. I guess it was a temptation, you know. – Aphiwe (22, 2 children, student).

> The guy I was dating was nice and kind but very stingy. We would hardly go out and have fun, so I dated this other guy. It was more for fun. – Akhona (20, 1 child, student).
>
> I loved my boyfriend but was also still in love with my ex-boyfriend. My ex-boyfriend had money, and he knew the things I liked so he'd spoil me, and I ended up cheating with him. – Babes (21, no children, student).
>
> I felt that my boyfriend was not committed to me. I didn't want to date a new person and lose that comfort of having him. I dated him for a while, trying checking to see if the new guy was really interested in me. – Nono (23, 2 children, employed).
>
> It was long distance. He worked in a different province and would only come back once in a while. The first few months were fine because we made plans to see each other at least once a month, but it became difficult to manage the distance. I just got someone close but continued with him too. – Soso (22, 1 child, unemployed).
>
> I had a crush on the guy and realised he too had a crush on me. I guess we acted on that. – Busi (26, 2 children, unemployed).

The above views shared by participants indicate that young women are not passive victims of the infidelity that they sometimes encounter in their intimate relationships. They too partake in infidelity, in the hope to find a better partner or to experience the happiness they are not feeling in their current relationship. The desire for better intimate relationship experiences led some of the participants like Asanda, Chuma and Yonela to shift from dating boys in their age group to dating older and more mature men. These decisions were underpinned by the persistent behaviour of infidelity, lack of commitment and abuse that they received from their boyfriends as shared in their earlier statements.

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Participant's behaviour of infidelity is reflective of views shared by scholars such as Krugu et al. (2018: 143) who maintain that although infidelity is perceived as a masculine sexual behaviour, women engage in it too. Infidelity is often assumed to be linked to financial benefits that the young women receive from the men with whom they engage in relationships. This assumption tends to overlook women as sexual individuals who derive pleasure from sex similarly to men. A somewhat similar view is suggested by Ngabaza et al. (2016: 75) who maintain that there is a tendency to constrain young women's sexual desires. It is, therefore, within the desire to constrain young women that they are perceived as engaging in other relationships while in a primary intimate relationship principally for material gain rather than sexual pleasure. Hence, when viewed as infidelity for sexual pleasure, young women become judged as promiscuous rather than recognised as exercising their sexual freedom. Participants indicated that they sometimes engaged in infidelity in their current

intimate relationships when testing new potential partners. It is, therefore, within their search for the ideal intimate relationship that they found monogamous intimate partners whom they describe in the following ways:

> I stopped dating people my age. I am happy with my man who is seventeen years older than me. I am not saying all older men are good partners, but I have had better relationships compared to when I dated boys my age. – Asanda (21, no children, employed).

> I don't know if age really matters, but I just do not date boys my age anymore. My current boyfriend is more than ten years older and has never used his age to demean me or shut me down. We joke we laugh, and we are just a normal couple. – Chuma (23, 1 child, employed).

> My boyfriend is forty years old, and I am twenty-six years old so. So, he is fourteen years older, and it's good. I prefer it that way to be honest. I told myself I will never date below forty-year-olds again, but I also do not go beyond forty-five years. That's just a decision I made; one that has nothing to do with his money that is why I decided that I do not go to a man for money. – Yonela (26, 1 child, employed).

Asanda, Chuma and Yonela perceived their relationships as ideal mainly because of the commitment that they receive from their partners lacking in their previous relationships. All the men that the women regarded as ideal were older with an age gap that ranged between fourteen and seventeen years. A commitment that they express thus:

> It's the communication that give you peace because you don't have uncertainty about where you stand with him. Like he will say, 'babe, what do you think about moving closer to me?' Then we discuss it and reach a compromise. I love that because it makes me feel that he recognises me as his partner and engages with me, then we make big decisions together. – Asanda (21, no children, employed).

> Like if I need financial help, he doesn't just give me money because he has it. We discuss the problem then he suggests how to avoid it from happening again. That kind of an approach is what I like; the communicating. He plans with me to show I am part of his decisions. – Chuma (23, 1 child, employed).

> He respects me. Especially when I compare him to my past boyfriends. The way he talks to me. He does not just want sex, but he talks about his plans, and we discuss how our careers fit into his plans. We communicate. – Yonela (26, 1 child employed).

It is within the above social context wherein young women negotiate their realities. Experiences intersect in ways that produce heterogeneous femininities that are characterised by risk-taking, vulnerability and flexibility.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter addressed the question of 'what are the lived experiences of young women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha?' As such, it highlighted structural vulnerabilities, thus, indicating the economic conditions that inform the socio-economic make-up of the Eastern

Cape Province. These are socio-economic conditions having far-reaching effects as indicated by the economic make-up of Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha. The socio-economic make-up being racialised, gendered, classed and aged whose multifaceted nature frames Mthatha as a primarily under-resourced rural town. In addition, this is an overpopulated social space whose population is predominantly youthful, comprising more females than males. The population is subsequently highly unemployed and has a low education. These structural features are indicative of the extensive impact of the historic gendered migration labour system through which men would leave Mthatha's surrounding rural areas in search of employment in cities. At present educated people are the ones who tend to leave Mthatha for bigger cities such as Cape Town and Johannesburg in search of better lives. In contrast, the less educated remain in this resource-deprived location. Here they compete for low-paying jobs in the CBD while alternatively engaging in criminal activities; a persistent spatial feature of Mthatha. It is this structural make-up that forms the background in which the heterogeneous realities of the young women are negotiated.

The above-mentioned spatial conditions shape the economic vulnerabilities that underlie the young women's lives. These economic vulnerabilities overlap in different ways as reflected by the varying economic struggles in which they engage, in negotiating womanhood. These being experiences of studying, unemployment and/or being employed in low-paying jobs that characterise the participants' backgrounds where only a few are in economically better positions. The young women's financial experiences overlap with gendered constructions that underlie their desires for intimate relationships. These desires are negotiated within spatial constructions of intimacy as indicated by their messy intimate relationship experiences in which all the women indicated engaging in infidelity while in primary intimate relationships.

Intimate relationships occur in an environment characterised by early sexual exposure, thus making young women vulnerable to teenage pregnancies and motherhood. Teenage pregnancies and motherhood shape young women's experiences differently as informed by the financial burdens of motherhood depending on the financial and emotional support from which the women can draw. This suggests that for many young women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha social class experiences are underpinned by experiences of motherhood and the economic burden of raising children without support from the children's fathers. These experiences situate these young women within different social class struggles compared to the young women without children.

The women's social class struggles exist side-by-side with social desires for fun. This fun tends to overlap with alcohol and drug use, thus forming contextual social boundaries of belonging. Hence, the young women who do not drink tend to experience pressure from their friends as well as from the men they meet in social clubs where they socialise. Social clubs are presented as spaces of both 'fun' and 'high risk' as women tend to be exposed to having drugs poured into their drinks and can potentially be raped while they are intoxicated and not fully in control of their senses. These situations indicate that women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha, negotiate their experiences in an environment of multiple overlapping experiences of vulnerability.

Moreover, it is within these experiences that they constantly negotiate with gender, race, class and age that structure their lived experiences in varying ways depending on their situations which are different and always subject to change. It is as a result of these interplays that their realities are heterogeneous and complex. As indicated in the participant's experiences, connections occur as a result of the far-reaching structural conditions of the Eastern Cape that have implications on township conditions in how they frame spatial realities. Spatial structuring shapes the women in terms of how they outline their access to resources such as education, spatial congestion, crime, poor infrastructure and employment. This is a spatial effect that subsequently influences the negotiation of realities at a personal level, as indicated by how the women negotiate their femininities on a day-to-day basis.

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CHAPTER 6 MECHANISMS AND STRATEGIES EMPLOYED BY YOUNG WOMEN: IN SEARCH OF INDEPENDENCE AND FREEDOM

6.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the mechanisms employed by young women in forging their livelihoods and in so doing, explores their broader strategies. Mechanisms in this context are broadly defined as the immediate day-to-day economic actions that are adopted by the women to meet their lifestyle needs. Strategies are the broad, progressively implemented, plans, within which the mechanisms fit. The mechanisms focused on are those that the women utilise to negotiate access to economic resources through which their current socially constructed realities are produced. The aim of this chapter is to address the study's objective of investigating the approaches that the young women draw from as they construct their lived realities.

The chapter considers agentic forms of social action that are recognised as shaped by the complexities that underpin the diverse lived experiences of the women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha. This discussion is significant in recognising the women as active social agents who participate in forging their realities. With this perspective in mind, the following discussion seeks to answer the second research question, which asks what mechanisms and strategies the young women put in place as they negotiate their lived experiences. The constraints due to the structural underpinnings of the township environment and the gendered norms affecting relationship dynamics were discussed in the previous chapter.

The discussion that follows unearths a number of emerging themes such as: first, juggling studies, part-time jobs and hustling: towards escaping financial limitations; secondly, coping with unemployment through adopting slay queen and/or blessee lifestyles: gaining money and social status through intimate relationships; thirdly, hustling and criminal activities towards monetary freedom, and fourthly, balancing employment and hustling to maintain financial independence.

Section 6.2 expands on the socio-economic aspirations of the young women that give a background to the means employed by them in negotiating their livelihoods. This undertaking is followed by an examination of the mechanisms as well as their implications for young women at Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha.

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6.2 Examining economic mechanisms employed by young women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha

Participants in the study shared similar goals of attaining independence and freedom through access to money that would enable them to purchase material things that are idealised by young women in the township. These aspirations the young women defined in the following ways:

> Independence, freedom, my own place. Those are the dreams we share with my friends. Have our own money. – Zaza (22, 1 child, student).
>
> We all have goals. I want to be my own woman. The kind that has her own money. Can afford what she wants, you know. Can shop, have a nice flat, travels with friends on weekends. That kind of financial freedom. – Akhona (20, 1 child, student).
>
> An ideal life for me is one where I have a car. I love the women who take charge of their lives. Have my own place. Live with my child. Affording to take him to private schools. – Yonela (26, 1 child, employed).
>
> I would be happy if I could afford. Have money to give myself and my child a good life like education. I would be happy if my child would have better education than me. If I could raise her differently where we can afford to go out to restaurants, movies. Those social activities with her and still have money to save. A financial stress-free life. – Nomhle (25, 1 child, unemployed).
>
> Not having to depend on anyone for money. Affording life, you know. Moving out of home and renting my own place. Affording my child too, because children are expensive. Having money to socialise with friends too. – Aphelele (23, 1 child, unemployed).
>
> If I was living my dream life, it would be having a good bank balance because money is power. If you have money, then you can make any dream come through. – Busi (26, 2 children, unemployed).
>
> Money, for me; money is what I would like because if I have money I can live in any area. I can afford clothes and anything that I am unable to get now since I do not have money. – Nono (23, 2 children, employed).

The above extracts by Zaza, Akhona, Yonela, Nomhle, Aphelele, Busi and Nono indicate that money is central to the young women's desires for better life because it allows access to improved living conditions compared to their current varying situations. These living conditions the women define as giving their children private school education as opposed to the township schooling that many of the young women had. Additionally, having their own place to live as opposed to their current living arrangements where they live at home with other household members. Also affording social activities with their children and/or peers are economic goals that are indicative of better lives and therefore important socio-status markers for young women; thus indicating how they form their subjective meanings of better

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life. These are desires that scholars such as Bongazana (2014: 61) identify as middle-class patterns of living as a result demonstrating affluence; a different socio-economic reality than the scarcity reflected by township patterns.

In the extracts below, the participants Akhona, Soso, Snazo, Asanda, Babes and Sbongile provide more details on the lifestyle they aspire to, thus providing more insight into the goals that motivate the women's desire for economic freedom:

> To be recognised as a somebody here you must wear Aldo, Forever New, so people want to slay. Like look good, be associated with certain people and things like those. 'Rock' a Fossil watch and wear weave. So, there's such kinds of priorities among young women in Mthatha generally. – Akhona (20, 1 child, student).

> There's social trends, you know. Things that almost every young woman wants. Not just want but believe are must-haves. Clothes, handbags, heels, weaves. Those are basics for other women, but for some of us, those are goals because its things are still yet to afford and look forward to affording. – Soso (22, 1 child unemployed).

> You hear people say girls just love money, but that is not entirely true. I think girls want to buy things that will make them feel pretty and stylish. They want to buy make-up, weave, do nails, that kind of thing because those things make them feel like they are womanly, you know. Like Bonang, Pearl Thusi [television personalities/celebrities] and all these pretty women that they always see on TV. We know we won't be like them exactly, but in some levels, we try. – Snazo (21, 1 child, student).

> There are levels [standards] to life, you know, and we want those upper levels. So it's about what you can afford compared to your peers, for example. – Asanda (21, no children, employed).

> Girls here want to be like Boity and Minnie Dlamini [television personalities/celebrities]. To an extent that they sometimes forget that those girls have money and we don't. Not the kind of money that they have. – Babes (21, no children, student).

> I guess girls have dreams and it boils down to that. Those who are in the township dream of living large someday and experiencing life like people in suburbs. There's that desire to be better and social media makes the dream seem possible because there is that access to daily updates from these celebrities. It gives an idea of what to dream of in a way. – Sbongile (27, 1 child, unemployed).

The above extracts by participants indicate that the media shapes young women's aspirations by providing images of which material comforts to idealise and what prosperous women should look like, thus painting the picture of a better life to which young women should strive towards. These standards of femininity penetrate township spaces shaping young women's aspirations as indicated by the statements made by Snazo, Asanda and Babes. Masvawure (2010: 864) and Motseki and Oyedemi (2017: 146) shared a similar perspective that the media provides the means for television personalities to display their constructions of wealth

and beauty in ways that influence feminine ideals. These influences even reach young women of impoverished background who may have no means to attain the standards that are portrayed through the media.

It is the above-mentioned aspirations that are shared by the participants in the study that provide the background to explain why they engage in particular economic activities to attain their desired lifestyles thus providing a context in which their financial choices may be examined. The standard of living, although shaped by the media, is subsequently influenced by the intersectionality that structures the township space. The women's spatial conditions modify the young women's dreams in ways that indicate the far-reaching gendered influences of the young women's socio-economic environment as indicated in the following statements by Nono, Zaza, Aphelele, Chuma and Busi:

> We want to feel good about ourselves. Like you are somebody. And you get that from the way you look because people will respond to how they see you. – Nono (23, 2 children, employed).

> People treat you based on how they see you. You slay, they recognise you for slaying. You look good, they respond to you nicely. So, fake it until you make it. Otherwise, you will sit here and keep envying others. – Zaza (22, 1 child, student).

> Guys don't come to you because you have a good heart but because you are pretty. Like you look good; you are on point. Let's be honest. So, you must be on point; otherwise, you won't be happy. Then everything else follows. – Aphelele (23, 1 child, unemployed).

> You want to be noticed by our type though because sometimes you get attention, but it's not from the kinds of people or men that you'd be happy to deal with. And that is a turn off [unappealing]. – Chuma (23, 1 child, employed).

> We do put effort in our look to get attention; attention in the form of compliments too. But also attention from those who envy you and those who like you. Some girls will say, no, I don't want attention. It's not true. We take pictures and share them on social media and enjoy receiving likes because its attention. For instance, who doesn't want their crush [someone they are sexually attracted to] to notice their good looks? – Busi (26, 2 children, unemployed).

The above extracts indicate how the desire for better relationships that are prevalent among young women in Ngangelizwe Township mould young women's aspiration in spatially informed ways. Gendered desires for relations are underlined by the widespread wish for ideal men among young women in Ngangelizwe Township, as indicated in the previous chapter. A yearning that is mutual in how participants such as Nono, Zaza, Aphelele, Chuma and Busi aspire towards images that will give positive feedback on their looks. An aspiration that Aphelele, Chuma and Busi sum up in their views of how looks tend to attract attention from men thus indicating how the desire to attract better relationships fits into the women's

broad lifestyle goals. Thus sharing a similar view to those of scholars such as Howell and Vincent (2014), Leclerc-Madlala (2004), Masvawure (2010), Wojcicki (2002b) and Zembe et al. (2013) who maintained that self-presentations of young women are loaded with subjective interpretations of feminine ideals into which the young women are socialised.

Meanings of beauty may sometimes contradict the economic realities of the young women, thus placing pressure on them to devise agencies in order to embody those constructions of beauty. This embodiment of beauty is simultaneously important in enabling women's access to ideal men, thus improving their chances of entering their relationship goals. This view forms the context in which scholars, such as Hunter and Posel (2012: 116) suggest that the structural marginalisation of young women in township spaces, together with pressure to conform to trending notions of femininity and social constructions of township masculinities, inform the environment in which young women devise their agentic actions. Agency can broadly be defined as meaningful socio-economic action that participants engage in daily towards meeting their lifestyle goals. Thus, indicating agency as negotiated and enacted on a subjective level through individual acts such as obtaining an education, seeking employment as well as engaging in transactional sexual relationships as reflected in the discussion below.

With the above views in mind, the following discussion outlines the various personal mechanisms that young women employ to meet their lifestyle goals.

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6.2.1 Juggling studies, part-time jobs and hustling as a means to escape financial limitations

Akhona, Aphiwe, Babes, Sasa, Snazo and Zaza are all studying at Walter Sisulu University in Mthatha as indicated in the previous chapter. These are studies through which they intend to obtain jobs whose salaries will improve their livelihoods, thus fulfilling their lifestyle goals as indicated in the following extracts:

> I'm looking forward to the financial independence, but sometimes I worry because I wonder if I will be employed. Sometimes people raise the issue of unemployment, and it makes me scared a bit. – Aphiwe (22, 2 children, student).

> One thing I truly look forward to is freedom, you know. My salary, my rules kind of thing. Not having to bring back a slip to show what you used the money for just to parents. This is my thought each time my mom asks for change when she sends me to do groceries – Sasa (21, no children, student).

> I'm looking forward to working just so I can be that kind of an empowered woman. You know, having my own money. That kind of freedom. – Zaza (22, 1 child, student).

> Education is like that boost, you know. That step that puts you ahead in terms of job seeking. So I hope for a job after this, so I can earn a living on my own. – Babes (21, no children, student).
>
> A job is all I'm hoping for. Permanent employment, a government job, a good salary then I can begin properly living my life. – Akhona (20, 1 child, student).
>
> We are all here because we want employment, you know. Good employment, unlike those without education. For me, that means good working conditions, like a permanent employment, so I don't worry about my job security. A good salary so I can afford a good life. Those kinds of expectations. – Snazo (21, 1 child, student).

The participants' statements above suggest that education is one of the mechanisms devised to access employment by young women to enable them to meet their lifestyle objectives. Education is a means to economic access that they employ within the intersectional constraints that characterise their diverse livelihoods. This is a view shared by Cotter et al. (1999) and Elu and Loubert (2013: 289) who maintain that socio-economic junctures often generate fluctuating experiences of advantage and disadvantage that social agents always have to navigate through. This view is indicative of how young women navigate through the advantaged position of being university students and the economic disadvantages that are outlined by the financial constraints informed by their socio-economic backgrounds. The experiences that inform the young women's descriptions of their financial situation are depicted in the following:

> I'd say the most challenging part of being a student is not having enough money. There's more need for money whether for going to school, data to access materials for assignments, or just to look after yourself because there is more self-consciousness so, there's that need to look good when going to campus. – Akhona (20, 1 child, student).
>
> Money is the main challenge with student life, you know. Because you constantly have to ask and understand when people say they have no money. – Aphiwe (22, 2 children, student).
>
> It really sucks being a student, although you know it's a good decision but there's those times when reality hits the most. When me and my friends are without money, and we want to buy something even if it's for school or just to go out and chill, but there is no money. – Babes (21, no children, student).
>
> It depends on where you come from. Our experiences aren't the same. Some have means, and others do not. Others make plans, and others do not, but money is a challenge because no matter what you do, you have to put your studies first. – Sasa (21, no children, student).
>
> Not having money is the common frustration that my friends and I talk about because unlike at high school, here we wear our clothes. Therefore, you must have money for

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> that. Your hair and all that just so you look fine. Then the constant printing and data. – Snazo (21, 1 child, student).
>
> I think it's because the financial demands are different from the ones we had in high school. For example, as a university student, you need data, and without it, is not easy to study. Things like that make not having money more of a big deal. – Zaza (22, 1 child, student).

The above statements by participants indicate some of the women's perceptions of what their financial needs are as students. Their needs, such as travelling to campus, access to study material, they raise simultaneously with their desires for clothes. Thus, suggesting that to keep up a good image is equally important to their student experience as is access to study material, for example. Scholars such as Masvawure (2010: 863) share this view suggesting that among university students, financial pressures are sometimes shaped by young women's perception of wants, such as clothing and access to cellphones, as needs. A view similar to one shared earlier by Leclerc-Madlala (2003: 224) who suggested that young women's economic mechanisms are sometimes responses to desires toward conforming to trending lifestyle images that the women tend to recognise as needs. A perception of need that is reflected by how participant's monetary requirements are driven by social desires to go out and chill with friends as well as do their hair and look good as indicated by Snazo and Babes. It is in view of these above-mentioned perceived social and image-oriented needs that the young women devise a range of economic mechanisms as indicated in the extracts below:

> I do various jobs like tutoring, and I sell lifestyle products like Herbal Life and Forever Living. Things I can do in flexible times. – Akhona (20, 1 child, student).
>
> My friends and I have work in clubs where we do promotions. Usually on weekends and end of the month to accommodate our studies. Like you give out flyers and tell people about the club, but sometimes they make us dance in mini-skirts, you know and chat to customers convincing them to become regulars at the club. More like entertainment work. – Sasa (21, no children, student).
>
> You just have to hustle, but for me, it helps that I am able to do hair because I get to do that and make extra money for myself. I braid/weave student's hair, but I don't charge them as much as hair salons because we are students, so I do it for less, and I do it in between my studies. More like on weekends or evenings. My friends and I have also worked at Spur as waiters just to make a bit of money. – Zaza (22, 1 child, student).
>
> I hustle like all the other girls do, you know. Well, I won't really call it hustling, but I get money from my guy. Like he knows I need to look okay so I'm like: 'Babe, I need to do my hair this week', then he will give me money. Or I say: 'Babe, I need data', and he gives. And to go out, I ask him for money because my granny will not give me that kind of money. I ask him because he knows I'm a student and he is working so where else must I get the things from? – Snazo (21, 1 child, student).

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> I often get money from my sister. She is my go-to person when I need money. Even clothes, sometimes I get them from her when she's back home because we are same size. We trade outfits, and I tell her she is gonna buy herself more since there are more affordable shops in Joburg. My friends suggested we do waitressing, but I need to see how my studies go before I can try that out. – Aphiwe (22, 2 children, student).

> My friends and I do weekend promotions, and during school holidays, we work so that we can have money when schools open. So, it's more like juggling school and work although studying is our priority, you know. – Babes (21, no children, student).

The above statements by Akhona, Sasa, Zaza, Aphiwe and Babes indicate that the young women employ multiple coexisting mechanisms that range from being independent to dependent. Regarding their dependence, they rely on various people in their lives for assistance in multiple forms while they are studying. The coexisting mechanisms they employ prioritises their education which they complement with a range of jobs that they fit in during their spare time. This situation is indicated by Akhona, Sasa, Zaza and Babes who mostly use their weekends to do a variety of part-time jobs. These participants' approaches differ from that of Aphiwe, who relies on her sister for both money and clothes. While Snazo relies on her partner, thus drawing on diverse social relationships in contrast to Aphiwe, who only draws on her familial relationship. Akhona indicates that drawing on diverse social relationships, such as partners, is an economic mechanism commonly used by young women. This is one that she too has drawn from in the past as reflected in the following statement:

> I have been in situations where I would get money from my boyfriend. Money for hair, clothes and those kinds of expenditures. It's common among girls to have their employed boyfriends provide for their needs like buying cellphones, giving them money to go out, for weave and stuff. However, I since decided to reflect on my priorities, so now, I just hustle for my money. – Akhona (20, 1 child, student).

Bongazana (2014), Leclerc-Madlala (2003) and Shefer and Strebel (2012) hold a similar view to Akhona's that young women's material reliance on their intimate partners is a commonly employed financial mechanism. As this mechanism in the case of participants is not devised exclusively but together with education, it suggests that the young women move between mechanisms. This juggling of financial means is encouraged by the persistence of the advantaged economic position of men and their access to resources, which provides the basis for young women's dependence on men for their material desires as suggested by scholars such as Bhana and Pattman (2011: 964) and Hunter and Posel (2002: 101). This viewpoint is elaborated on in the following discussion of mechanisms used by the unemployed participants. They, given that their financial constraints are shaped by being unemployed aspire for a better social status. An observation made by De Lannoy et al. (2018b: 6) is that although young women from disadvantaged backgrounds are often overrepresented among

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the unemployed, those who are without tertiary education often generate pathways out of poverty for themselves. This calls for recognition of the young women's subjective agencies within the varying contexts of multiple coexisting forms of deprivation. It is with these views in mind that the following discussion examines the economic means exercised by unemployed participants in negotiating their socio-economic realities.

6.2.2 Coping with unemployment through adopting a slay queen and/or blesser/blessee lifestyle: gaining money and social status through intimate relationships

Low levels of economic activity underpinned by a dearth of employment opportunities are some of the defining features of the Mthatha area, as indicated in the previous chapter. This situation lowers the options of those without post-high school training even more given their lack of skills with which to bargain. However, it does not hinder social agents from devising means to access the financial materials that they deem necessary to meet their lifestyle goals. This perspective is maintained by scholars such as Tshishonga (2015: 5) who suggest that South African women in disadvantaged communities tend to negotiate their realities from a position of inclusion in exclusion thus pushing various multiple contradicting boundaries that outline their environment. An experience of inclusion in exclusion manifests in how lack of access to information and/or skills, among other factors, often excludes young women from township spaces from partaking in economically advancing initiatives. These initiatives, such as the Umsobomvu Youth Fund[7] and National Youth Development Agency,[8] are aimed at including them in economic activity. Thus, reinforcing their disadvantaged experiences, by continuing to overly represent them among the unemployed.

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The above view is similar to one earlier shared by Msimanga (2013: 95) who maintains that young women in the township are more represented among the unemployed youth, thus experiencing more effects of economic exclusion. A situation that she blames on gendered social roles through which females often give up education following gendered experiences such as teenage pregnancies and motherhood that often compel the women to raise the children. In doing so, they lose out on education and acquiring skills that would increase their chances of employment. It is within this context that scholars such as Mosoetsa (2011) and Tshishonga (2015) maintain that it is as a result of the widespread gendered unemployment

[7] Umsobomvu Youth Fund is an initiative by the South African government that is aimed at creating opportunities for South African youth in the areas of business skills development, entrepreneurship and job creation.

[8] National Youth Development Agency provides various forms of support to the South African youth towards career/business development. Support ranges from information provision to skills development.

experiences in township spaces that alternative forms of economic engagement are so pervasive among young women.

The participants Akhona, Chuma, Sasa and Nono capture the alternative forms of economic engagement that is often devised by unemployed young women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha in the following statements:

> Girls in Mthatha date big guys [financially well-off/men with money] like tender boys, amarhuzu (high-class criminals), DJs[9] and all those kinds of people so they can have access to that luxurious kind of life. They get money to slay, and it's a status kind of thing. – Akhona (20, 1 child, student).

> People want money and status, so they go for the men who don't mind splashing money on girls. It's all just a status thing to prove that they belong with certain men who can afford expensive alcohol, shopping and taking them to hotels. – Chuma (23, 1 child, employed).

> Girls in Mthatha like fashion and status. They want to date men who have cars and money, things that they as girls do not have. You must see them in the evening when their men pick them up with cars or drop them off. It's like a show-off that my man is better than yours. – Sasa (21, no children, student).

> Being a slay queen is all about fashion and status. It's getting money to buy things that give you an image of people on TV then using that image to get attention. Girls want money, easy and quick so they can look rich through make-up and fashion and expensive alcohol that they cannot even afford – Nono (23, 2 children, employed).

Participants suggest that for some young women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha the way to attain a social status is through association with financially well-off men; men who can afford to give out money to girls. This is because unlike the young women, the men's livelihoods are often not negotiated within monetary constraints. Therefore, they can give money as well as gifts, thus engaging with young women from a masculine economic position of power. It is in recognising the man's financial power, as well as an awareness of their potential to draw from the men's resources that lead young women like Aphelele and Busi who are both currently unemployed, to use intimate relationships as an economic mechanism as reflected in their statements below:

> You have to open your eyes when you choose who you sleep with. Don't just be with someone who can't do anything for you; otherwise, you will struggle, and no one wants to struggle. – Aphelele (23, 1 child, unemployed).

[9] Disc jockeys

> You must secure the bag [money]. Love does not pay the bills. So, when you decide to date, make sure you've got your cards in order. Don't just follow your heart but follow the bag [money]. – Busi (26, 2 children, unemployed).

The above statements by Aphelele and Busi suggest that pressure to conform to lifestyle trends such as fashion that both participants cannot afford because they are unemployed underlies their individual choices of financial reliance on men. This economic mechanism subsequently tends to put pressure on the young women to maintain images that will make them attractive to the financially well-off men whose attention they seek as indicated by the participants in the following statements:

> You need to look good and all that, so you need a guy who will give you money for all that besides, the better you look, the better the chances of getting an even better guy than the one you are with. – Aphelele (23, 1 child, unemployed).

> You've got to keep up, you know. Be aware of what is trending and make sure you are on point [look good]. That's your ticket. Dress the part and be seen at the right places. Know where these guys hang out so you can meet, socialise and hopefully find your way to the bag [money]. – Busi (26, 2 children, unemployed).

The above views by Aphelele and Busi suggest that financial dependence on men is a deliberate economic action that participants enter into with clear financial goals and an understanding of what procedures individuals must follow to meet their material goals. A view that is shared by Aphelele in the following extract:

> In a place like Mthatha, there are only a handful of men with money. Unfortunately, there are many girls who want these men. So, there is always that pressure because girls throw themselves at your men. You have to always be on point [look good] so that he does not easily get distracted, you know. – Aphelele (23, 1 child unemployed).

Aphelele's reference to her approach of maintaining her transactional relationship shows her understanding of the rules of the game. Thus, reflecting a perspective maintained by Hunter (2002: 101) who suggests that transactional relationships are agencies that young women approach not as passive victims, but with power and in order to access economic power through their image as an asset with which to negotiate. Thus, the young women who employ this economic mechanism do so in ways that tend to both challenge and reproduce patriarchal structures. This is in how they present their bodies in ways that sexually appeal to men to get attention through which they can receive the material goods they want. It is within this context that scholars such as Leclerc-Madlala (2003: 228) suggest that transactional sexual practices may act as signifiers of modern life and sexual equality in how young women use sexual relationships to reflect their freedom to choose sexual partners and their image and how to use this image to draw the sexual benefits they want from men.

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Alternatively, Tshishonga (2015: 13) maintains that the overwhelming desire for materials visible among township youth, underlining the alternative mechanisms through which young women employ agencies such as transactional sexual practices, needs to be recognised as young women's desperate response to being blocked from better aspirations by the structural vulnerabilities that characterise the township space. These vulnerabilities manifest in a lack of role models from whom the young women would envisage different economic means. It is, therefore, the lack of role models that tend to be filled by the media which encourages materialism without providing the young women with options on how they can meet the materialistic goals. Thus, leaving young women to devise risky alternative mechanisms such as transactional sexual relationships.

Notwithstanding the above views shared by scholars such as Tshishonga (2015), young women such as Busi display careful thought to their inter-generational liaisons from which they draw material benefits. Transactional sexual relationships, although sharing similar features in how young women draw money from men in exchange for sexual favours, differ in form. Hence Busi's economic strategy is different from the one employed by Aphelele as indicated in the above extracts. Busi defines her economic strategy in the following way:

> Older men have finished paying their bonds. Most have kids who are at varsity and wives who are working, so they are no longer paying car finance and all that, so that's what's good about them. They have money to spend. Unlike young boys like us who still have all these responsibilities and with whom we are sharing the same struggles. So that's what this is all about. Well, kind of. – Busi (26, 2 children, unemployed).

As indicated in the above statement, Busi prefers older men who are often married and therefore become her blessers. Blessers are predominantly married men with whom she is in relationships that are loosely defined as a 'no-strings-attached' relationship, which means that sexual partners do not fall in love. They are together because of the mutual benefits that they derive from the relationship. To give more detail to the blesser/blessee relationships based on their previous experiences, Snazo, Sasa, Nono, and Chuma defined the blesser/blessee lifestyle in the following ways:

> Blessers don't really commit to the girls because they have their families. They just want girls to have fun with, that's all, so it's a no-strings-attached kind of thing. So sometimes the boys [blessers] will get the girls over, and if they want to have two-some [sex with two girls at the same time, they do that]. Moreover, there's alcohol, money, fun and all that. – Snazo (21, 1 child, student).

> Say, for example, there is a political rally or business meetings things like those. Girls come to his joint [place/venue], and the first round of alcohol is on him. The girls are invited to entertain [sexually] the big boys [blessers], and then they get whatever money from them. That's what girls do. Then on a regular basis, they will meet the

> tender boys [blessers] and all those kinds of people with whom they exchange sexual favours. So, it can either be you who is invited or your friend. There're no catching feelings, so whoever is called gets drinks for friends, and that's more like how it works. – Sasa (21, no children, student).

> Let me give you an example of a blesser. I once dated a married man, and he would give me money and take me with to his business meetings, but I would go shopping during the day when he is with his business associates then when he is done he would send a driver to fetch me, we would have fun and sex like a normal couple. He gave me money that man, and he took me for holidays and lots of business trips. But we broke up because he started catching feelings [falling in love] and was jealous when I was not available because I am with my boyfriend. That was a blesser because we were both together just for money and pleasure but no commitment or plans for the future. – Nono (23, 2 children, employed).

> Blessers really spend on the girls. I mean real blessers. They fill up the table with alcohol if you are in a club. Don't think when a man gives you a few hundreds they have blessed you. These guys really spend. I had a white guy I met at a club and we dated. He was married, and I can really call him a blesser. He really gave me money. Like lots of money, we had sex; we would travel together when he had business meetings but no commitment because he was married, and I was not looking for commitment from him. We were together just for money and fun. – Chuma (23, 1 child, employed).

While the participants Snazo, Sasa, Nono and Chuma no longer devise blesser economic mechanisms, Busi and her friends continue to employ this economic mechanism as reflected in the following statement:

> My girls [friends] and I usually go out a bit early and hang out. We make sure we have like R 3 00 or so for our first drinks [alcohol] while we wait for the boys [blessers]. They start coming in around ten in the evening and whoever shows interest will join your table. They buy drinks and keep them coming. Chat, exchange numbers if you want and the night goes on. Then settle the bill at the end. That's what happens when girls go out. You don't always go together the first time. We usually chat, and they invite you again for drinks, and things then unfold like that, although some may want to go with you that same night. It all depends. But you have to be smart too, so you are not taken advantage of. Like make certain excuses so you can avoid going with him that same night. You must make sure they really have money, that is why you don't just give in so easily. – Busi (26, 2 children, unemployed).

The above statement by Busi outlines some of the complexities that characterise transactional sexual relationships in which she receives gifts such as alcohol and money while devising means to avoid or prolong engaging in making an exchange for the gifts she received. This view is shared by scholars such as Selokow and Mbulaheni (2013: 87) who define young women as exercising agency through exploiting sexuality for material gain and avoiding or delaying sex after receiving the resources until they are ready. Thus, reflecting Masvawure's (2010: 858) stance that transactional sexual exchanges are not just a straightforward give-

and take in which women give men sex and men give women money. In addition, these mechanisms cannot be exclusively defined in terms of the power imbalances in terms of age, gender and money, thus suggesting that the young women have no agency. However, these mechanisms should be recognised as ones in which young women who devise them fluctuate within varying experiences of advantage and disadvantage. With the above discussion in mind, the following section examines how some young women employ criminal activity as an economic mechanism.

6.2.3 Criminal activities for monetary freedom and fun

Women's deliberate involvement in criminal activities is a subject not often discussed due to the perception that crime is a male-centred transgression with women exposed to it predominantly as victims rather than perpetrators. This perception needs to be interrogated given the involvement of women in crime as perpetrators, where they may engage in crime alone or with their male counterparts. The participation of young women in criminal activities is a common occurrence at Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha, as indicated by six participants who pointed out that they personally know girls who engage in criminal activities for money. In comparison, eight participants indicated that they know about girls in the area who commit crimes for money, including one participant who had committed crimes in the past. The participants' knowledge of women engaging in criminal activities as an economic mechanism is indicated by Yonela, Snazo, Akhona and Busi in the following statements:

> My friend's sisters are involved in some deals [criminal activities]. I know them, and I know what they do, and that is how they make money to buy cars and maintain the expensive life that they live. – Yonela (26, 1 child, employed).

> I know girls in my neighbourhood who have been in jail for crime like pushing drugs and stuff. They may not be as many as the boys I know that do this, but they are there. I know some who are thieves too. And it's easy to be robbed by girls because we never suspect them. – Snazo (21, 1 child, student).

> Come, let me show you one of the girls who is a tsotsi [criminal/thief]. You see that lady? [pointing towards a middle-aged lady who was chatting with others] She is one of the tsotsi [criminal/thief] who rob people. – Akhona (20, 1 child, student).

> I wanted quick money. I had a job, but sometimes you look at the salary, and you wish it was a bit more. My male friends and I would take the stock through backdoors to sell and make more money. I didn't do it for long though because I was caught and lost my job so now I am here unemployed. I don't like talking about it though because I feel bad for what I did. – Busi (26, 2 children, unemployed).

The above extracts by Yonela, Snazo, Akhona and Busi indicate that some women use crime as an economic mechanism. Criminal activities range from robbing people as indicated by

Akhona and Snazo to forging partnerships with male criminals as in the case of Busi. This is an economic activity through which the women obtain money to meet their economic needs as indicated by Busi in the following extract:

> Sometimes the salary is just too little, and the cost of living is high. You just look at the salary and realise there is no way you are going to make it until the end of the month. Don't get me wrong, I am not justifying my actions, but sometimes it's just too bad. – Busi (26, 2 children, unemployed).

Busi's statement is indicative of a criminal activity that is motivated by economic reasons, which reflects that despite the silence on women's involvement in crime, young women engage in crime for reasons similar to those of men. This view is held by scholars such as Hussein (2018: 3) who maintain that the study of female crime has not kept pace to date, possibly because society might not be ready to move beyond perceptions of women as meek, gentle and quiet; views that fit the prevalent portrayal of women as victims of crime. These are views that fail to recognise the economic pressure that women sometimes face due to unemployment and/or inadequate salaries that can leave them in desperate situations where they may rely on alternative means to meet their economic needs. Hoffmeester (2018: 25) and Vetten (2000: 1) concur suggesting that women's engagement in criminal activities needs to be recognised in how it is shaped by the same reasons that draw men into criminal activities, which are economic needs and a desire for a better lifestyle.

The economic and lifestyle needs that motivate women to rely on criminal activity as an economic mechanism need to be recognised in how they are shaped by the spatial environment of the women and thus moulded by the social demands outlined in the locations. A situation indicated in how young women like Busi suggest being motivated by the pressure of having money quickly. This financial pressure is commonly experienced by young women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha as a result of demands such as conforming to fashionable wear and social drinking among other lifestyle trends. The prevalence of social pressure is reflected in the following statements:

> But, who really wants to wait for month end to get money when they can get it faster? There is constant need for money and sometimes waiting is hard, especially if you know that what you are waiting for is not even enough to meet the needs that you have. It's not a lie that we all want money, but some just don't like to admit it. – Busi (26, 2 children, unemployed).

> Young people want money fast here. I think there is no patience, hence too much crime among young people. And girls are following a similar pattern. They want money fast. – Nono (23, 2 children, employed).

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While young women like Busi may employ crime as an economic mechanism, other young women like Aphelele engage in criminal activities such as drug use, specifically cocaine (also known as coke) for fun. This indicates the multiple manifestations of criminal activities among young women at Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha, as indicated in the following statements by Aphelele and Akhona:

> Sometimes we experiment then end up hooked. My first experience was just that, but I wouldn't say I am hooked because I only take it [coke] when clubbing. Most girls take coke that way. Not outside of that social experience. It's common but only when clubbing. – Aphelele (23, 1 child, unemployed).
>
> My boyfriend's friend owns a club. That's where you get to see how easy and common coke [cocaine] is used especially by girls. – Akhona (20, 1 child, student).

The above statements by Aphelele and Akhona reflect the popularity of criminal activities, thus creating a closeness to drugs with or without one's consent as indicated in the following extracts by Busi, Akhona and Snazo:

> One day my friend gave me a bag to hold onto for a few minutes saying he'd be back soon. For some reason, I decided to open the bag, and it was full of drugs. I was so scared because I wasn't sure if he gave me because he was being chased by police or what. – Busi (26, 2 children, unemployed).
>
> I wanted to try coke [cocaine], but my boyfriend said he'd beat me if I did, so I never tried them, but other girls use it. – Akhona (20, 1 child, student).
>
> When we are in the club, I see the girls taking some. It's not uncommon to see slaying girls taking coke [cocaine]. – Snazo (21, 1 child, student).

Scholars such as Motamedi et al. (2016: 11) maintain that one of the possible underlying factors that sometimes encourages the increased engagement of young women in criminal activities such as drug use is the lack of healthy leisure activities in township spaces. The lack of activities which underlies the boredom often leads many young women to experiment with alcohol, cigarette smoking and marijuana from an early age thus possibly creating a gateway into later trying out more potent substances such as cocaine. Whereas, Desai et al. (2019: 4) and Hendricks (2015: 31) suggest that peer pressure, through its provision of a sense of belonging is one of the factors that tend to encourage engagement in risky behaviours such as experimenting with drugs.

The above perspectives suggest that subjective socio-economic engagements of young women should be examined in how they are influenced by the social groups in which they belong. These groups may be important to the young women in how they provide them with a sense of belonging. This is an important feeling that may pressurise them to conform to group activities in which they would not usually partake. The following discussion examines how other young women devise their employment as an economic mechanism through which

they meet their lifestyle goals. This will unearth how their employment experiences render them similar and/or different from the young women who are students as well as those who are unemployed. The women who are employed have different employment experiences within the variety of jobs they hold, as indicated in the discussion below.

6.2.4 Balancing employment and hustling to maintain financial independence

The participants, Asanda, Chuma, Nono and Yonela indicated that they rely on their employment to access money through which they meet their lifestyle desires. Work provides the women access to money, while also giving them a sense of independence, as revealed in the following extracts:

> The one thing I love about working and having my own salary is not having to ask for money every time. It gives you some kind of confidence that you make your own money. – Asanda (21, no children, employed).

> When you work and earn a salary you get to do things you wouldn't easily do, you know. I think even your parents see you as some kind of an adult now because you are working and you contribute at home. There is that independence that you are no longer a child. – Chuma (23, 1 child, employed).

> There is the financial freedom. Getting your own salary and being able to spoil yourself without having to ask anyone. Drinks, holidays that kind of thing. You get treated like an adult and its nice. – Nono (23, 2 children, employed).

> Being employed gives you confidence and a sense of security. You feel good because you are earning our own salary, so you are not completely dependent on anyone. You also plan your life better based on your salary. Life becomes more real because your plans are based on money that you can see. – Yonela (26, 1 child, employed).

As indicated by the participants, employment is important to the young women because of the monetary benefits linked to it, which allow participants to plan and execute their goals. Employment also frees them from complete dependence on people, thus increasing their confidence while boosting their self-image so that they view themselves as adults rather than dependents. While employment is proving to be a significant socio-economic development milestone for these young women, its benefits tend to be limited by how they tend to be more represented among low-paying jobs. This compromises the financial freedom they hoped to get through employment. This view is reflected in this study where half of the working participants earn approximately R 3 000 a month in comparison to the other half who earn between R 9000 and R 15 000. This viewpoint is also shared by scholars such as Bhatasara and Chirimambowa (2018: 24), Durano (2018: 13) and Madzwamuse and Kouakou (2018: 6) who maintain that women continue to become overly represented among the poor despite their over-representation in the labour force. Women's situatedness shapes this poverty as

they are in low-paying informal jobs where there is no job security, and no benefits are provided. In addition, they struggle to meet their financial needs; hence they are likely to be living in poor households even though they are working. This view is also shared by participants who stated the following:

> Although it's great that I am working, but it's also a challenge because I am unable to do much with my salary. It's really not enough since I help at home. So, while I am glad that I am working, there is that stress when I think of money because it's just not enough. – Asanda (21, no child, employed).

> I have children, so there are more demands for money. Even without children, my salary would still not be enough to meet my needs, but then it's better than not working at all. I sort of look at it like that. – Nono (23, 2 children, employed).

> When I started working, I got paid roughly R 9 000. Its lots of money for me because I have never had so much money before. I sent all this money home to my mother, and she used it to build our four bedroomed home. The financial demands sometimes make your money seem little even when the figures make it sound like it's a lot. – Chuma (23, 1 child, employed).

> Its good that I work and have my salary. I am able to not only provide for my child but help my grandmother and my brother, so that is good because when I was a student my brother, my child and myself all relied on my grandmother but now I am here to help. – Yonela (26, 1 child, employed).

The above statements by Asanda, Chuma, Nono and Yonela suggest that being employed does not always exclude young women from financial vulnerability due to the structural intersectionality that the women experience in forging their realities. For example, the gendered nurturing role that sees young women like Nono, Chuma and Yonela raising children; balancing the unpaid gendered role with their paid work. This is a feminine role undertaken while simultaneously trying to improve the livelihoods of their households. This is indicated by Chuma, who had to build her family home, helping her mother whose limited financial conditions hindered her from providing a good home for her dependents. Thus indicating how the gendered responsibilities of childcare coexist with a financially impoverished background is informed by the past racialised economic discrimination that shaped Chuma's household economic situation. The effects of this background continue to shape the young woman's realities in how she carries her economic needs as well as the economic needs of her household. It is within this context that scholars such as Ossome (2018: 18) maintain that women's labour continues to be rooted in the history of colonial domination in which women's experience of work is a constant negotiation between paid and unpaid work. Thus, indicating how the gendered division of work compromises women's economic mobility by subordinating women's agency to patriarchal structured structuring powers.

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It is within the above context that scholars such as Magubane (2016: 1) maintain that the socio-economic conditions of social agents within the township space create an environment in which young people may need to provide economic support for their family members once they attain financial freedom. The notion of black tax conceptualised by Magubane (2016: 1) maintains that it creates a financial burden on young people, being one of the reasons why young black employed people living in township spaces may take time to acquire their own homes, afford cars or live the kinds of lives to which they aspire. This viewpoint suggests that young women's employment experiences are not just the results of individual's choices but are embedded within structural realities that continue to outline the gendered inequalities that characterise young women's experiences of employment.

The young women's attempt to stretch their incomes in order to meet their individual goals inform the various ways in which participants attempt to balance their salaries through various forms of hustling as indicated in the following statements:

> My boyfriend paid for my flat and my transport then a few months later we moved in together. That's why I was able to send all my salary home. When we broke up, I then kind of got into these sexual relationships, and I would get whatever I want in return. Cellphone, money, you name it, and they give you just for that intimate moment. I no longer do that. Now I hustle, you know. Sell products and supplement my income. – Chuma (23, 1 child, employed).

> My boyfriend takes me to work now and again. Sometimes I go sleep by his place to cut the costs if I'm running short of money for transport. He really helps me out and bails me out when I run short of money. – Asanda (21, no child, employed).

> If I need money, I just borrow from my grandmother then pay her back. – Yonela (26, 1 child, employed).

> I usually borrow money from the people I'm close to. Like when I'm out of transport money to work and things like those. – Nono (23, 2 children, employed).

The above statements by participants suggest that relying on their different relationships, such as intimate and familial, is how they balance their salaries. This reliance on relationships they complement with hustling as indicated in the case of Chuma, who reveals she sells products to make more money. This is a mechanism she employed after abandoning the transactional sexual mechanism, as reflected in the following statement:

> It was just too risky, and I decided it's not worth it. I am happier selling my products because I get my own money and I add it to my salary. It's like having two salaries, you know. – Chuma (23, 1 child, employed).

Asanda, who receives help from her boyfriend, defines the context in which the assistance occurs in the following way:

> My boyfriend does not just give me money like a blesser gives out money. Although he works and has a good job, he is not a blesser. He only helps me when I need help, but even then, we discuss money matters. He does not just give me the money. He also takes me to work, for example. We both make lunch to work to save on money. Our relationship is not just about him giving me money. – Asanda (21, no children, employed).

Asanda describes her intimate relationship in a way that sets it apart from a transactional sexual relationship, thus indicating an intimate relationship whereby receiving help from her partner is part of the relationship but not its main goal. The above experiences of participants are reflective of views by scholars such as Bebbington (1999: 2023) who maintain that social ties are a central element in the economic decisions of financially vulnerable people. A suggestion that is supported by scholars such as Warren et al. (2001: 1) who propose that relationships of trust and cooperation between people are important among financially vulnerable communities in how they serve as social security and a coping mechanism thereby enabling households to survive within their socio-economic limitations. These are often kinship ties, friendships, intimate and community-based relationships that are characterised by reciprocal socio-economic exchanges. These relationship networks provide those who belong to them with a pool of resources such as money, help with child care, help in the form of information and other forms of social assistance that people may draw from in times of need. These are the kinds of relationships that participants indicate drawing from in the above discussion, thus indicating social capital as a mechanism with which they balance their employment in order to meet their socio-economic needs.

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The above discussion suggests that young women devise a range of subjective mechanisms that they negotiated at an individual level in order to cope with their realities as well as find ways through the economic constraints that characterise their realities. These are personal economic mechanisms that indicate that the women are aware of their role in the construction of their lived realities hence they engage in education, employment and/or partake in risky economic and social actions through which they meet their different goals. The socio-economic activities in which they participate they do so while being mindful of the constraining effects of their social environment as indicated in the following discussion on approaches employed by young women to escape the economic constraints that outline their realities. These are strategies such as: first, leaving the township; secondly, surviving the township, and thirdly, temporary survival while envisaging leaving the township.

6.3 Strategies employed by young women to meet their lifestyle goals

Participants indicated that they are making plans to escape the economic constraints that characterise their lives and their social space. The plans to escape the unemployment that characterises Ngangelizwe Township and Mthatha, in general, are indicated in the following extracts by Nomhle, Aphelele, Soso, Sbongile and Busi:

> Sometimes I think leaving and being in a different city. New environment can give me a new start and finding a job there, like the other people who left and are now doing well, according to what we see when they visit. Better than they did when they lived here. – Nomhle (25, 1 child, unemployed).

> I plan to leave this place and go to either Johannesburg or Cape Town to start a new life. I know it won't be easy, but that is one of my goals. – Aphelele (23, 1 child unemployed).

> I want to go, you know. I have been telling my family that I am going to leave and go find a job in Cape Town. I know some people in Cape Town, so that will be a better place to go. – Soso (22yrs, 1 child, unemployed).

> There are mines in Johannesburg and bigger security companies. That is why I would love to move there. I think getting a job would be easier there. I would really love to leave. – Sbongile (27, 1 child, unemployed).

> I do consider moving to East London Cape Towns is a bit far; that is why I think East London would be a better option for me. – Busi (26, 2 children, unemployed).

The above statements by participants indicate that the young women are reflecting on their unemployment beyond their individual level, thus understanding how it is embedded within the commonness of joblessness in their social space. This observation underlies their strategy to seek employment opportunities in other cities that have better infrastructure, as indicated by Nomhle, Aphelele, Soso, Sbongile and Busi. The desire to leave is expressed even by women who chose to live within the economic constraints that characterise their livelihoods thus not conforming to alternative means of material access as indicated in the following extracts by Soso and Sbongile:

> I prefer spending time at home, helping with the tasks that need to be done here. I also go to church. So, if I am not home, I am at church or in town to get whatever we need. When I'm bored, I just do my gardening or watch TV. I do have friends, but this is how I spend most of my time. Away from all these demands of life here, you know. – Sbongile (27, 1 child, unemployed).

> Andingomntu uthanda izinto [I am not the kind of a person who likes things] and that is just me. I guess I just accepted my life, but when I find a job, life will be better. – Soso (22, 1 child, unemployed)

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Although Soso and Sbongile suggest coping within their current financial constraints; however, they recognise a need to leave thus indicating this as a strategy to obtaining jobs that will improve their livelihoods. This attitude is underlined by the socio-economic improvements in the lifestyles of other young women that the women know, who have after leaving Mthatha had their lifestyles improved, as indicated in the following extracts by Aphelele, Busi and Nomhle:

> A friend of mine left and went to live in East London. She is now employed and doing way better than she did when she was staying here even though she left after high school. She took her kids to live with them that side, and sometimes I feel like that's the way to go. – Aphelele (23, 1 child, unemployed).

> My friend moved to Cape Town, and she works there now. She has not been back since she left, but I see her post online, and she is definitely living the life, you know. She is glowing, and you can just see that she is doing good. – Busi (26, 2 children, unemployed).

> Many people who left the township come back in December and June holidays looking really good. Some left as students and are now working some are even driving their own cars, you know. Some live in Johannesburg. The ones across our house live in Cape Town. Others left after matric, and they come back, and you can tell that their lives have really improved. – Nomhle (25, 1 child, unemployed).

The above statements by Aphelele, Busi and Nomhle indicate that the viewpoint within which participants make sense of their plan to leave is shaped by comparisons that they make with women outside of their social environment. These are women with whom they shared similar economic experiences but whose lives have changed in ways that suggest that the economic realities of participants are not a mere product of their individual choices but also a product of their spatial conditions. Hence, the solution to a better life is not just finding a job but leaving the constraining social space and finding a job in other cities as indicated by Nomhle who generalises the positive outcomes of leaving Ngangelizwe Township and Mthatha. The above statements by participants suggest recognition of their realities as being produced beyond a subjective level thus shaped at a spatial level with their economic constraints informed by the structural constraints that underpin the social constructions of Ngangelizwe Township and Mthatha in general.

The above-mentioned observation is indicative of a perspective that was earlier shared by Bourdieu (1993) who suggested that fields of cultural production filter power down in ways that outline subjective experiences of inclusion and exclusion within which social agents negotiate their realities. This suggests that personal economic actions are subjected to the structured structuring norms that tend to shape the outcomes of personal agencies. Collins

(1990) and Hulko (2009) similarly maintain that the forms of domination that structure social spaces mutually exist and interact in ways that inform subjective experiences of socio-economic inequalities. This view suggests that socio-economic deprivation is not a mere product of lack of agency but is shaped by the various ways in which the underlying structures tend to constrain agencies thus confining chances to escape experiences of deprivation. Hence, scholars such as Smith (2018) propose that understandings of social spaces and their historic social construction are fundamental to the understanding of the livelihoods of social agents within those social spaces. Thus, indicating that agency cannot be conceptualised outside of the spatial context of the young women who conceive and perform the varying forms of agency, since the context provides the background as well as the limits within which the agencies are enacted. It is therefore with this recognition of the constraining effects of their social space that participants plan to leave Ngangelizwe Township and Mthatha, in general, to seek better economic opportunities in cities such as Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban and others.

6.3.1 Surviving in the township

Yonela and Chuma indicate a desire to stay in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha and improve their lives. Their strategy is shaped by their current employment status as well as the resources that their employment provides towards meeting their goals as indicated in the following statements:

> I just want to get my driver's licence. I am busy with my driving lessons currently. Then I can get a car and take it from there. I have no plans to leave because I have a job so I can't just go, you know. It's not something that I am thinking of currently. – Yonela (26, 1 child, employed).

> I am not planning to go. I moved from Johannesburg when I got my permanent job here.
> I am not moving again. I have to improve my life and grow in my career. – Chuma (23, 1 child, employed).

The above extracts indicate that the women's plan to stay are predominantly shaped by their access to job security as well as the socio-economic prospects linked to these jobs. This is indicated by Chuma's reference to her employment being permanent. Yonela similarly indicated she has no plans to move, referring directly to her employment status. The participants make these decisions to stay while being aware of the fundamental constraints that characterise their social space, as indicated in the following statements by Yonela and Chuma:

> Getting employed here is not easy, so when you have a job, you don't take it lightly. It's not just a matter of education because there are many educated young people who are unemployed. There is this girl I was friends with, she lived down the road and had a degree from WSU [Walter Sisulu University]. She now lives in East London after being unemployed for a while she left, but she is now working in East London. – Yonela (26, 1 child, employed).

> Sometimes you just see it as luck, you know. That is why I wouldn't want to mess it up by thinking of leaving. So many young women are unemployed, and you find that those who are employed are also struggling a lot because they either get low salaries or they work part-time. Others are more educated than I am but could not get jobs here. My aunt's children both have degrees. One did GIS [Geographic Information System] in Cape Town and has been without a job for two to three years and went back to Cape Town. I don't know what they are doing there because they do not come back anymore. – Chuma (23, 1 child, employed).

Both Chuma's and Yonela's views suggest that the participants are aware of the broad structural constraints that shape experiences of employment and unemployment; hence they do not want to compromise their jobs. This recognition is indicated in how they perceived being employed as not only being shaped by education. This is because they know young people who are educated but are not employed, thus indicating that unemployment is shaped beyond personal levels; hence, Chuma suggests that it could just be through luck that she is employed. This view suggests an awareness that the women's employment position is not a mere product of their agency shaped by education or training but a negotiated outcome between their education/training and the structural underpinnings that characterise their social space. These are structural underpinnings whose contradictory effects drove other educated young people to leave Mthatha and secure employment in surrounding cities such as East London as indicated by Yonela. The above discussion, therefore, suggests that the participant's decisions to stay in Ngangelizwe Township are informed by understanding how experiences of inclusions in the economic system in Mthatha through employment coexist with the exclusion of others with whom they share similar features such as education and training. This reflects the position of Brah and Phoenix (2004) who suggest that the power of structuring structures sometimes manifests in contradicting ways that produce complex and far-reaching experiences of inequality that cannot be easily understood if only examined at a personal level.

It is within the above-mentioned perspective that Faragó (2016) maintains that intersectionality should be recognised in how it creates a context in which people who may share similar features may not necessarily share similar outcomes. Thus, indicating how the structuring structures that underlie social spaces influence individual experiences within the

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social spaces in ways that produce different socio-economic results as indicated by Chuma and Yonela's observations that not all young women with education qualifications are employed. These observations underlie Chuma and Yonela's decision to stay in the township and enjoy the benefits of their employment while making way to achieve their lifestyle goals as indicated in the extracts shared earlier. This decision is different from the ones of participants whose strategy is to temporarily live in the township while dreaming of one day, leaving it as indicated in the following discussion.

6.3.2 Temporarily stay in the township while dreaming of leaving someday

Nono and Asanda indicated they dream of leaving Mthatha someday although they are not sure when. However, it is their goal to move away as indicated in the following statements:

> I do consider that option of moving, but for now, I'm doing what I can to cope here. I was thinking of going to a place like Bloemfontein because there are colleges, plus I do not know people, so it would be a fresh start for me. Maybe study and get a part-time job too so I can pay for my studies. Those are my thoughts about leaving this place when the time comes. – Asanda (21, no children, employed).

> It is something that I think of. I look at life around here and tell myself one day I will leave and only come back to visit, you know. Go work in Johannesburg or something. That's my hope that someday I will go, but you don't just up and go. You must have a plan in case you struggle to find a job there. – Nono (23, 2 children, employed).

Although Asanda and Nono may both envision ultimately leaving Mthatha, they share different goals of what they would like to do in the places where they wish to move with Asanda indicating an interest in furthering her studies. A strategy that she explained in the following way:

> I just think I may be able to focus because I won't have friends and I won't be familiar with anyone if, for example, I move to Bloemfontein. I don't even know how the social life is that side. All those distractions, you know. I can just focus on studies and work and take it like a new start, new friends I can study with and all that. That kind of thing, you know – Asanda (21, no children, employed).

Asanda indicated that her strategy to leave the township is shaped by a desire to escape some of the pressures that underlie township life. Hence, she would like to relocate to a place where she does not know anyone so she can create new social bonds based on her plans to study. Her strategy differs from Nono's who describes her desire to move as motivated by the following views:

> I think it's mostly about my children. Sometimes I look at life here. I get concerned about my children's future. So many children here who drop out of school and all these negative influences that make me want to move to a different place of work

> where I can give them better experiences so they can have more positive influences. – Nono (23, 2 children, employed).

Nono indicated that her goal to leave the township is based on her perception of the possible negative implications it holds for the future of her children. Her concerns are about the prevalence of harmful influences that may have a trickle-down effect on her children; hence her desire to move to a place where there are more positive influences than negative. Asanda and Nono share similar concerns about the social pressures posed by their social space. However, for Asanda, the concerns are directed towards herself while for Nono, the concerns regard her children. These pressures are underlined by the prevalence of crime, substance abuse, school dropouts, teenage pregnancies and youth unemployment as indicated by various scholars (Mosoetsa, 2011; Swartz et al., 2016; Swartz et al., 2012; Swartz, 2007 and Xulu-Gama, 2017). These spatial features underlie Ramphele's (1989) description of townships as spaces in crisis. This socio-economic crisis has a widespread impact which is indicated in how it may constrain the economic activities that young women engage in with the intention of bettering their lives thus leading them to dream of migrating to other social spaces.

With the above views in mind, Figure 12 summarises the mechanisms and strategies employed by young women towards meeting their goals. This is followed by a discussion that examines the possible implications of the young women's agencies, thus examining their agencies against the intersectional township space within which the agencies are conceived and employed. This discussion outlines the risks that young women are susceptible to as they employ their agencies. This analysis provides ways of conceptualising agency in ways that recognising both the vulnerabilities and the constraints that these young women experience as they construct their realities.

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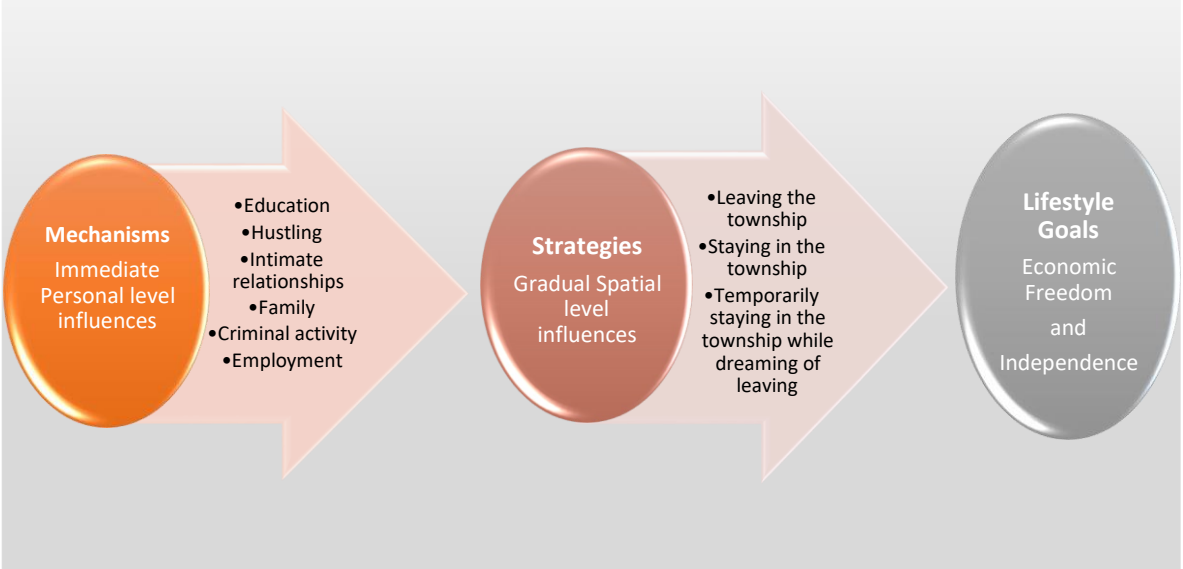

***Figure 12*: Summary of mechanisms and strategies employed by young women towards their lifestyle goals. (Source: Author's own)**

6.4 Possible implications of the young women's agencies: self-empowerment versus dependency continuum of agencies

The above discussion suggests that participants draw their agencies from a continuum of dependency versus self-empowerment mechanisms. The different points they draw from are informed by where the participants are located within the main mechanisms, that is, student, employed and/or unemployed. Participants who are students suggested education as their primary mechanism through which they envision attaining economic prospects through future employment. The mechanism of education is complemented with economic means that allow them immediate access to money. This indicates that although education is a financial mechanism, its delayed economic prospects create an economic pressure that intensifies the need for complementary approaches that enable quick access to money. These complementary approaches are economic means such as tutoring, selling lifestyle products, hair styling for students as well as dependence on intimate partners. These financial instruments range from independent to dependent; a dependency that participants are aware of hence an indication that reliance on intimate partners is not a long-lasting mechanism. However, as Masvawure (2010) maintains one that is drawn mindful of education as their gateway to economic upliftment.

Drawing on dependency-oriented agencies is also prevalent among participants who are unemployed as indicated in the experiences of Aphelele and Busi. Both these participants

indicated transactional sexual relationships as slay queen and/or blessee as a means of drawing their money. This is a financial means that the women juggled with criminal activities through which they draw money and fun, thereby suggesting increased risky economic mechanisms among the unemployed. This reliance on risk-taking is underlined by a lack of post-high school training, thus suggesting that drawing on alternative economic means is devised within a background of limited economic options. This is a view that supports one earlier shared by Tshishonga (2015) who maintains that risk-taking among young women needs to be recognised as underpinned by structural disadvantages that often leaves them without better means to meet their lifestyle goals. This outlook grounds the prevalence of transactional sexual relationships among young women within the interplay of lack of skills to negotiate employment due to lack of post-high school education as well as structural constraints that lead to the pervasiveness of unemployment in the young women's social space.

Employment is the mechanism through which the young women frequently conveyed experiences of financial independence in how their salaries often reduced the pressure to depend on others for money. However, the experiences varied depending on the economic benefits linked to employment. Hence, participants indicated variable situations that shaped the need to complement employment with other economic mechanisms. A necessity that they met through reliance on hustling, familial relationships and intimate relationships. A reliance on intimate relationships that the women conceptualised differently to transactional sexual relationships thus indicating that the link between sex and the receipt of money or gifts is nuanced and complex and can only be understood when taking into account the conditions that underlie the exchange process (Stoebenau et al., 2016). Socio-economic conditions should be examined beyond the individual's level. This requires reflecting on the structuring structures that overlap in ways that create both the need for a money exchange within intimate relationships and makes the exchange process as a commonly relied on means to address economic needs.

The above discussion proposes that the mechanisms employed by young women to meet their economic demands be conceptualised as a continuum of deprivation, agency and instrumentality. Scholars such as Ranganathan et al. (2017) Stoebenau et al. (2016) held this view too, maintaining that continua better conveys the tremendous ambiguity noted in the meaning and motivation for socio-economic exchange that occurs across money-sex-exchange contexts. This is a nuanced and complex exchange that is intertwined in the

continuum of agency, instrumentality and vulnerability that characterises the background within which the socio-economic exchange occurs in these sexual relationships that are noted among young women of varying economic realities. Thus, suggesting that reliance on men for resources is intertwined with experiences of vulnerability and agency that emerge as women negotiate their access to resources. This perspective is illustrated in Figure 13:

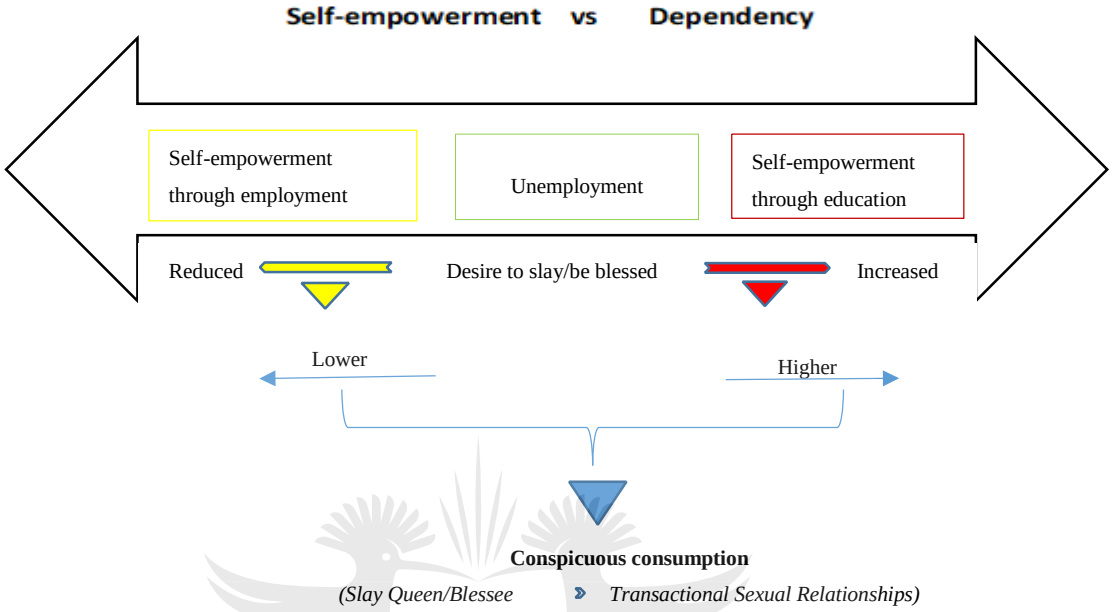

***Figure 13*: Economic mechanisms drawn from a continuum of self-empowerment versus dependency. (Source: Author's own)**

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6.5 Potential vulnerabilities that underlie the money-material-sexual exchange

Reliance on sexual partners for money and material benefits often expose young women to various vulnerabilities such as proneness to rape, unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections are common as indicated in the following extracts by Akhona, Chuma and Nono:

> He grabbed my phone, I followed him, and we left. Along the way, I got hold of my phone and thereafter jumped out of his car as he was driving. Hit my head on the road and was unconscious only to wake up in the morning. As I woke up, I did not know where I was, my body was in pain, but I could feel that something had happened and my panty was there at the bottom of the bed. I knew what he had done. The guy had taken me to his house and forced himself on me while I was unconscious. With or without protection, only he knows, but I saw no sign of a condom nearby. – Akhona (20, 1 child, student).

> I realised that these guys would only use protection on day one. When we have sex the second time, they refuse to use condoms because they feel that they are giving me something in exchange for sex, so why use condoms. When I insisted on

> condoms, the mood just changes, and the man is no longer nice. That is when I realised that giving me their money and cellphones and other gifts made them think they can do anything they want, and I had no reason to complain. – Chuma (23, 1 child, employed).
>
> When a man gives you money, they often believe that gives them the right to control you. Especially blessers since they give you lots of money although they are not all controlling. You see it in how they somehow want to dictate your availability. Especially when he knows, you cannot afford what he does for you. They become controlling, and they want to know where are you, who are you with, why didn't you answer your phone, who is this person calling you. – Nono (23, 2 children, employed).
>
> It hurts sometimes because you know that you are not the only one he does this with and you cannot complain because he is not your boyfriend as such. Yes, he is your partner, but he has his wife, you know, and he has other girls because he is free to have whoever he wants. Same as you have your boyfriend. That is why you have to make sure you don't get pregnant; otherwise it would be very messy. Whose child will you say you are carrying? His or your boyfriend's child? Those kinds of things are some of the risks for me. Then there's infections, you know. – Busi (26, 2 children, unemployed).
>
> I know girls who were forced by their blessers to abort because the man won't risk his marriage for you. When you get into a relationship as a side chick [mistress], you can't turn around now and want to be the main dish [main partner/woman]. The wife is there and you must respect that. That is the problem with being a blessee, when girls want to be treated like the main woman. – Sasa (21, student, no child).
>
> The problem with man is that he takes more advantage when you depend on him and he knows you have nothing to fall back on. Because the dude [guy/man] knows he has money and you do not, so he cares less about your feelings, he is less emotionally invested. He cheats and comes back and gives you money because he knows you need the money. If he speaks badly, he buys you clothes and stuff; he knows you will take them. At least if you work, he knows you don't completely depend on him, but when you are unemployed it's a different story, I tell you. – Aphelele (23, 1 child, unemployed).

The above extracts indicate that women in transactional sexual relationships are exposed to multiple threats despite consciously choosing their sexual partners. These risks range from men wanting to determine and control the conditions of sexual engagement, the refusal of which may lead to rape as in the case of Akhona. The exposure to sexually transmitted infections is highlighted by the openness of transactional sexual relationship to multiple sexual partners, as indicated by Busi. Furthermore, susceptibility to emotional abuse is high as these relationships occur in a setting where the men negotiate between getting pleasure through extra-marital sexual relationships and maintaining their marriages. It is within this context where the young women may be prone to emotional abuse once incidences such as unwanted pregnancies occur. Pregnancies in transactional relationships risk putting the

men's marriages at risk as it could expose their infidelity to their wives. As Sasa indicated, it is in this context that young woman may be coerced into having an abortion without her consent as a way for the blesser to protect his marriage. These multiple vulnerabilities suggest that transactional sexual relationships are not free from gendered social constructions that underpin women's experiences of patriarchy through which women tend to become subjected to intimate partner violence.

It is therefore within the above setting that scholars such as Ranganathan et al. (2017:10) maintain that although young women appear to have considerable agency at the point of positioning themselves in a relationship from which they draw socio-economic benefits that they desire; once positioned in the relationships their bargaining power within the relationship appears to weaken. A perspective that is similar to one shared earlier by scholars such as Bhana (2012), Dunkle et al. (2006b) and Leclerc-Madlala (2004), whose studies revealed that the risk-taking behaviours of young women tend to expose them to unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections, rape and potential forms of abuse from male their counterparts.

The above discussion suggests that the mechanisms employed by the women are rooted within structural underpinnings of gender, class, race and age that form the background to the intersectional township spaces (Hart, 2002; Mazibuko and Umejesi, 2015; Oduro et al., 2012; Swartz et al., 2012 and Swartz et al., 2007). It is as a result of this embeddedness in multiple axes of domination characterising the township space that the young women's agencies tend to situate the women within patriarchal experiences of vulnerability. Thus, indicating a persistence of gendered power differentials that are indicative of how unevenly distributed economic power continues to be in social spaces. Maintenance of masculine control is indicated by how males continue to have economic power, while women remain compromised through confinement in unpaid gendered roles and low-paying jobs, therefore subject to varying sexual conditions through which they receive financial help from men (Hart, 2002; Mazibuko and Umejesi, 2015; Oduro et al., 2012 and Swartz et al., 2007). These gendered sexual, economic situations are subsequently structured by age, given that many of these women are young compared to the men with whom they enter into relationships. This age difference indicates how multiple axes of distinction and control interlock in ways that illustrate how women's experience of economic freedom and independence tend to be constrained by structural factors that transcend individual boundaries. Thus, indicating that spatial realities outline the construction of subjective realities.

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It is within the above-mentioned awareness of how agency tends to be constrained by structural conditions that young women conceive their strategies. The young women's plans, such as dreaming of leaving the township in the future, indicate their awareness of the hindrance posed by their social space towards the fulfilment of their lifestyle goals. This view reflects the young women's strategies as being influenced and subsequently having an influence on the individual and spatial level through exercising a range of strategies. The strategies are informed by a conscious evaluation of personal realities, weighing these experiences against the economic realities of other young women with whom they share a similar socio-economic background. For example, Nomhle, Aphelele, Soso, Sbongile and Busi who plan to leave Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha indicated that their strategies were informed by looking at young women whose lifestyles improved after leaving and whose experiences the participants use to consciously weigh the costs and benefits of leaving or staying in the township. Their strategy differs from Yonela's and Chuma's strategy, which was to stay in Mthatha. Furthermore, this differs from the strategies of women like Asanda and Nono, who are temporarily staying while they consider leaving. This difference in strategies indicates that multiple axes of domination intersect in ways that influence the young women's lives differently, producing heterogeneous experiences of advantage and disadvantage. This, therefore, frames the varying contexts in which young women from similar social spaces experience have different experiences of socio-economic inequality from which their strategies are conceived.

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6.6 Conclusion

The above discussion outlines the economic mechanisms and strategies that are employed by young women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha. These economic means are examined within the varying socio-economic contexts in which they are employed, thus uncovering the multiple backgrounds that frame the agencies negotiated by young women in Ngangelizwe Township. The economic actions that the study proposes cannot be understood outside of the context in which it is they are negotiated. This view underlies the study's recognition of how ~~the~~ mechanisms and strategies are often constrained by the intersectional structures that characterise Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha.

The above discussion proposes that the agency of the young women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha does not render the women entirely vulnerable to the structuring structures that underlie this social space. Nor do their agentic economic actions render the women free from the intersectional spatial constraints that characterise their social space.

However, the young women's instrumentality is recognised as an ongoing negotiation through which they fluctuate between experiences of advantage and disadvantage. This fluctuation depends on the situations that characterise the positions they are negotiating from as they engage in the construction of their realities.

The above discussion proposes that the interplay of structuring structures such as gender and age perpetuate the economic experiences that shape the context in which young women employ transactional sexual relationships as economic agencies through which they draw their material resources. Thus, recognising the embeddedness of women's realities within a patriarchal economic system that outlines both the circumstances in which their economic constraints are produced as well as the means through which the economic constraints are often addressed. This recognition conceptualises young women's agencies as ongoing negotiations between the women's subjective experiences and the complex intersectional social construction of township spaces that have far-reaching effects on their lived experiences. This is indicated by the range of strategies that they conceptualise as their gateways to economic freedom and independence. It is within the above-mentioned viewpoint that the study recognises the agencies of young women in Ngangelizwe Township are negotiated through constant examinations of their lives and their social space rather than viewing agency as static forms of economic instrumentality. This perspective subsequently recognises young women's realities as flexible in how they are modified based on how young women continuously make sense of their agencies and the circumstances within which their agencies are devised.

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CHAPTER 7 BENZ'ICEBO: ECONOMIC ACTION THROUGH A CONTINUUM OF DEPENDENCY, INSTRUMENTALITY AND VULNERABILITY

7.1 Introduction

> It's really hard here when you really think about it, but you know moss, iintombi zinecebo [women make plans]. – Aphelele (23, 1 child, unemployed).

The above quotation succinctly captures what motivated this study, as Aphelele referred to hardships that formed the background to the experiences of the women in Ngangelizwe Township hinting at their agency and resilience, which this study explored. The aim of this study was to outline the social constructions marking the lived realities of women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha, consequently revealing the intersectional socio-economic oppressions that underpinned these constructions. It was hoped that this undertaking would help offer insights into the lived experiences of a select group of research participants. This is because understanding their realities is necessary to facilitate the development of policies, the conceptualisation of projects and investment in career-learning programmes that will benefit the young women. These are benefits that may address challenges such as unemployment thus reducing gender inequality while subsequently curbing the need for the women to engage in risky lifestyles for money. This would address the high unemployment to which the women in the study continuously refer.

The broad over-riding aim of the study was guided by arguments made by intersectional theorists such as Anthias (2012), Beames and Telford (2013), Collins (1990), Crenshaw (1989), Faragó (2016) and Low (2006) who suggest that realities of women are shaped within locations that are underpinned by coexisting categories of suppression. These are overlapping structuring structures that shape cultural institutions that underlie subjective experiences through the norms and values that outline the women's socio-economic actions. Thus suggesting that, although the women's agentic actions are recognised as products of common sense, they are unconsciously adopted as social actions. These social actions are shaped by the intersections that underpin the cultural institutions forming the background of their social spaces (Bourdieu, 1985; 1989; 1990; 1993). This suggests that women's realities are intertwined with the intersectional constructions of their township space (Collins,1990 and Crenshaw, 1989).

Given the above view, an examination of the economic characteristics of townships was fundamental to understanding these spaces, and to uncovering how the material conditions

of this place produce and reproduce women's realities through the way they negotiated their economic realities. The importance of this examination lay in its promise to unpack the complexities that underpinned the economic environment within which townships are internalised, made sense of and subsequently externalised by young women who live in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha. In this scrutiny, the KSD Municipality and Eastern Cape Province where Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha is situated, was also focused upon. Given this introduction, the rationale, as well as the main objectives that directed this study, is discussed below.

7.2 Rationale

This study intended to explore the aspirations of the women in this area, investigating the agencies they employed in meeting them. This study was based on the standpoint that townships, which are the locations where the participants are situated, are fields of power that do not exist as independent fields. They are interdependent and exert power in ways that sometimes produce these fields as intertwined with the broader fields surrounding them. This view influenced how Ngangelizwe Township was thought about, particularly in terms of the rural nature of KSD local municipality in which Mthatha CBD is located. This is the local municipality whose economic structuring is framed by the OR Tambo district as well as the Eastern Cape Province in which it is located. In general, this thesis was one that investigated the effects of deep and continuing economic hardship and its definitive and formative consequences on how women act, think and make agentic choices in Ngangelizwe Township. Such a study has not been done in the Eastern Cape Province before. This thesis, therefore offers an original, intersectional, and certainly new analysis through exploring the notions of aspiring for 'bare' and 'better' life, and implications of this for future gender analysis in South Africa. It was, therefore, within this standpoint, that the study subsequently adopted its key objectives as indicated in the discussion below.

7.3 Objective of the study

In view of the above-mentioned motivation of the study, a core objective was to elicit a comprehensive account of young women's livelihoods and economic mechanisms as well as strategies in Ngangelizwe Township. This undertaking required that an inquiry of the lifestyle choices women favoured in the light of consumerism in post-apartheid South Africa would be intensely probed. In addition, advancing a theoretical argument on the juncture of structural vulnerability, risk-taking, and agency in terms of the way that it shaped the lives

of young women in Ngangelizwe Township would be necessary. It was within this objective that intersectionality was adopted as an approach. Intersectionality enabled the scrutiny of realities as products of interactions between two or more forms of subjectivity, resulting in heterogeneous experiences of everyday life. Consequently, it required grasping the diverse experiences produced within the varying experiences of advantage and disadvantage that social agents found themselves in as they negotiated within their mutually coexisting economic structuring; one that simultaneously informed their realities in sometimes contradicting ways.

This broader objective necessitated three research questions:

- What are the perceptions of young women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha, regarding the main issues shaping their lives and intimate relationships?
- What mechanisms and strategies do the young women put in place as they negotiate their lived experiences?
- How can these women's lived realities be explained theoretically?

Before addressing these questions, a comment on the methodological approach is offered, partly because this approach was instructive in informing the extent to which the three research questions could be substantively answered. It is therefore in view of the above-mentioned key research objective and research questions that the ethnographic approach to the study was employed. Lived realities, it was surmised, can best be explored in observing the day-to-day lives of women. Thus, snapshot type approaches (e.g. quantitative surveys) were not deemed sensible. The ethnographic approach to data collection was selected based on its benefits towards meeting the objectives of the study as indicated in the discussion below.

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7.4 Approaching the research concerns: using ethnography

The main importance of ethnography for this study is that it enabled the researcher to gain an in-depth insight into the lived experiences of young women within a township space. This understanding was obtained by living closely with the research participants and sustaining a rapport and continuing conversation. An important and unique aspect of ethnographic research, also shared by scholars such as Chughtai and Myers (2016), Jones and Smith (2017) and Schrock (2013), who propose that ethnography enables researchers to navigate the social

spaces where social action occurs, thus, enabling them to explore life as it unfolds among participants.

Staying in the same community with participants allowed the researcher to observe societal members as they embarked on their daily routines. This offered the researcher an understanding of social realities beyond the personal stories shared by the participants. Hence, by staying in close proximity to the participants for an extended period of time the researcher was able to identify social behaviours, some of which the participants were not aware of or took for granted as common-sense occurrences. The gendered enactments in the daily routines of participants, in which the majority of them engaged in household chores and child-caring routines that many balanced with work and/or studies, suggested the persistence of gendered role divisions in the research site. A persistence of feminine social performances was also reflected by how the unemployed young women would convene in social circles of friendships discussing their latest fashion trends, intimate relationships, and their plans for the day. These discussions captured their feminine perceptions of beauty and understandings of markers of social status. Therefore, the participants revealed perspectives shared by ethnographic theorists.

Mahler and Pessar (2006: 31), maintained that the strength of ethnographic methods is how it enables observation of gender negotiations within social contexts which allows for an understanding that social agents perform gendered roles beyond the male-female distinction. Social actions that reflect that gender performance occurs within negotiations through which social agents engage with femininity constructions in ways that reflect recognition of gender boundaries. These ways sometimes challenge gender limitations and also simply test them. Actions are recognised through witnessing the various agencies through which gendered experiences are negotiated. This view is also shared by Schrock (2013: 55) who maintains that because ethnography enables researchers both access to observe and dialogue with participants, they gain the means to recognise the gendered inequalities that women are subjected to as well as to recognise their resourcefulness. This results in researchers gaining first-hand access to what participants say, what they do and how they do it. This transcends views of women as either being victims or the invulnerable – and recognising them instead as actively negotiating their realities within contradicting experiences of both power and vulnerability.

The ethnographic research approach was an ideal one that enabled the researcher to forge meaningful bonds with the various participants. These bonds facilitated a constructive

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atmosphere through which the participants provided the rich data. These ties were forged as the researcher participated in social events such as church services, social club activities, funerals and other social gatherings where youth were inclined to congregate. During these events, and through participation and observation, the researcher experienced deep feelings of appreciation for ethnography.

The tactics of participant observation, central to ethnography, for example, allowed the researcher to learn common social expressions used by the participants such as referring to potential blessers as 'big guys' or 'boys' and referring to potential blessees/slay queens as 'girls'. While these references revealed the renegotiation of words to fit the particular social environments, it allowed the researcher to make more sense of the particular one in which she was conducting her study.

Ethnography offers researchers a distinctive way of doing research – it enables a researcher to be deeply involved for a long and intensive period in the data collection process. This view is maintained by scholars such as Chughtai and Myers (2016); Jones and Smith (2017) and Schrock (2013) who describe ethnography as a way in which researchers study lived experiences as they occur. This represents an extensive research process that requires time and persistence from the researcher. Researchers need patience through the many transitions, from being judged as an outsider, a social threat, to being respected and regarded as integrated and one of them (Schrock, 2013: 55). For example, at the initial stages of the research process, some participants would simply walk away from the researcher to talk privately. Some of these conversations would be followed by occurrences such as isiqhazolo sentsini/ukukhuza [loud laughter], leading the researcher to assume that there was some disbelief in what someone had said or done. However, through being patient, the researcher became a permanent part of the social groups, to the point that these private talks occurred in her presence.

As the young people in the social groups became comfortable with the researcher's presence, they felt no need for extra privacy. Some of these talks became predominantly about alcohol, sex, vulnerability and money. It was also a social space where young people would share with their friends the details of events that occurred in their friend's absence. For instance, there would be occasions where the women would share how they obtained money from men but were able to trick them with excuses when the men demanded sex in return. There were also instances where they talked about unpleasant experiences such as being slapped by boyfriends for dancing with other men in the club, sexual encounters with other partners, or

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one-night stands with men they had met randomly at a club. They discussed feelings about men, their infatuations with them in the past or present or men they wanted to get closer to for financial reasons or because of their looks. Conversations among the women showed that they were not passive and that they understood their agency and ability to muster their power and employ it in varying contexts. These valuable social exposures were therefore, significant in how they made the researcher aware of both the realities of the participants and the context within which the realities unfolded.

While most of the social experiences offered positive learning experiences for the women, long-term engagements with them made the researcher aware of the moments of vulnerability that occurred in their lives. In some cases, the women would find themselves endangered, and the researcher was there to witness this, such as when men would not accept their advances being refused. Occasionally, club owners would intervene on behalf of the women. In such situations, it would seem that the presence of men served as both a source and solution to the problem in that men perpetrated the experiences that produced vulnerability (and in some cases protected women against potential harm). While these experiences were important in exposing the researcher to some of the contexts in which women were at risk, it also created a sense of fear and unease for the researcher since violent outbreaks were always possible and easily triggered. The period of ethnography made it clear that while social clubs are spaces for socialising in townships, they are subsequently spaces of unrest where violence can erupt at any point in time. It is, therefore, the distinctiveness of ethnographic research techniques that offered the researcher the opportunity to share in the lived experiences of women and connect with them, in ways that other data collection methods are not able to. This research experience led to the unearthing of the following summarised empirical findings, which revealed the originality of the doctoral study.

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7.5 Key empirical findings: original outcomes

The following discussion outlines key empirical findings, thereby demonstrating how each of the three objectives of the study was addressed. The first objective aimed to establish how women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha, describe their own key realities and aspirations, thus unpacking how their lives are shaped by the structural factors that create their social space. Key features of these realities such as education (and women's successes or lack of progress), employment (and women's job opportunities or scrounging for finances) and involvement in crime were apparent.

7.5.1 The realities of young women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha

In conversations with the women, it was clear that Ngangelizwe Township was viewed as a social space of structural vulnerabilities and that this was noticeable in their socio-economic lives. They attempted to work with and overcome their poor living conditions, by making it more viable, and that is why there was, for example, a practice of leasing backyard rooms to bring in more income. Living arrangements were shaped by the lack of employment, the growing population and the need for housing in the area. The housing congestion was tolerated as long as it created a thriving possibility for tenants. This revealed how adversity was occasionally reworked into 'opportunity'.

Many of the women were dependent on others for income and social grants. Ngangelizwe Township was consistently described as a space of hardship and economic discontent. For those who stayed away from 'illegitimate methods' of earning money, reliance was on a combination of social grants (predominantly child and old age) as well as salaries drawn from tenured or short-term employment. Thus, the point of this discussion was to affirm the shared reality of post-apartheid townships, that is, severe economic hardships and women's struggle to survive in the face of this. The economic realities discussed informed the general dissatisfaction of women whose frustrations resulted from how their financial situation contradicted their financial desires. While most South African research on township life increasingly refers to the growing sense of disillusionment that young people experience in contemporary South Africa, *not many studies highlight levels of aspirations*. An original aspect of the present study has been women in economically challenged sites who are not only concerned about basic survival, a 'bare life', but social existence demands something 'better', an elevated status, recognition and respect. The deep desire to afford a better life was reflected, for instance, in the women's dress sense, their accessories and the cars they accessed. These better life desires indicated that consumption as related to prestige is a priority among women in Ngangelizwe Township. It is, therefore, as a result of the better life aspirations that unemployment and general lack of economic opportunities were received unfavourably. Consequently, to attain the desired end goal, the women entered into an environment that encouraged devising alternative economic sources such as ones through criminal activities.

For many of the women, the goal they wished to achieve was more important than the means. Crime, which was highlighted as prevalent in the area of study, was therefore recognised as a consequence of limited economic opportunities. It was also a short-term tactic that these

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young women could turn to because it was useful and of some help in getting to the better life. Inadequate opportunities overlapped with poor physical conditions as reflected by poor roads and lack of streetlights which made it difficult to police the area properly. It is within this context that law-breaking was highlighted by participants as one of the key features that defined Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha, with criminal activities ranging from theft to drug use. The illicit engagement was evident among both men and women, with women in some cases being active proponents and not just minor accomplices. This finding contradicts the typical portrayal of women as merely victims of crimes. Criminal activities did indeed coexist with the prevalence of alcohol use. These qualitative findings resonated with statistics for alcohol use which showed that consumption of alcohol is predominant in Mthatha and Eastern Cape in general where roughly 45% of Grade 8, 9 and 10 learners experimented with alcohol between 2016-2017 (Eastern Cape Liquor Board Annual Report, 2016/17: 35). The women's experiences revealed that getting to a more prestigious 'better life' needs constant negotiations and strategising.

The presence of children aided or inhibited the young women's abilities to negotiate. Since sexual exchange was central to their survival strategy, unintended pregnancy was frequent in the area. Men regularly denied paternity, thereby leaving the women to raise children alone. This denial of paternity occurred within a context of multiple intimate relationships where men and women often engaged in sex without protection. There were complex sexual engagements through which some of the men would make multiple women pregnant at the same time. Thus, while women used sexual partnerships strategically, they were also vulnerable to various risks and setbacks. It was within these experiences that many women defined intimate relationships as messy. This expression also captured the abuse, infidelity and disrespect these young women experienced from the men with whom they were in relationships or were dating. Infidelity also occurred from the women whose actions were either for sexual reasons or seen as a gateway into new relationships because of dissatisfaction with their current partners.

Unpleasant intimate relationship experiences coexisted with more pleasant relationship experiences that the women defined as their ultimate goals. In these pleasant experiences, they defined the men as more mature, respectful towards them and therefore, better intimate partners compared to those of their age groups whom they had previously dated. In this sense, the intimate relationships with these 'better' men were not specifically talked about as driven by the desire to access money or gifts thus contradicting the common and simplistic portrayal

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of older men as monetary providers to younger women. The younger women viewed older men as able to offer love and a sense of security. In short, the study's first finding was that notwithstanding the harsh economic realities, women in Ngangelizwe Township sought to go beyond survival and the sustaining of a bare existence. The extent to which women in poorer communities strive for high status, comfort and prestige and how they 'negotiate' and systematically build this future is often ignored in the literature; which tends to depict them as always victimised and incapable of agency. This study revealed the young women's initiatives to straddle legitimate and illegitimate means to get to a better life.

7.5.2 Young women's mechanisms and strategies towards lifestyle goals

It was in view of the above-mentioned discoveries that the second objective was met. The second objective was aimed at identifying and discussing the agencies of women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha. The second research question that was subsequently answered was, what mechanisms and strategies do these women draw from as they construct their lived realities? This entailed examining the following: the economic means that were employed given the aforementioned financial circumstances in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha, and, the fiscal conditions that interplayed in ways that limited the women from attaining their desired better life experiences. The activities the women engaged in were therefore uncovered in how they promised the fulfilment of the women's aspirations of a better life, thereby shaping the lifestyle choices of the women in the area of study. The mechanism, such as advancing education beyond high school with the hope of future career prospects, was examined. Advancement of education led to financial dependence as the women depended on their families to meet their schooling needs. This financial dependence coexisted with experiences of financial independence where women would take on temporary economic activities such as selling goods, braiding hair, working in social clubs as well as offering tutoring lessons. The women sourced an income through these temporary activities to finance their varying lifestyle demands.

While a few women advanced their education, others sought work. This economic experience was important in how it brought financial independence that allowed them to meet their lifestyle demands as well as make financial contributions to their households. These economic roles were produced by a combination of a desire to conform to common lifestyle trends and the women's household inadequate economic situations. The insufficient financial circumstances of their households saw the young women making a variety of contributions ranging from helping to build their homes to paying their sibling's school fees as well as

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contributing towards food. The different forms of assistance depended on what the women could afford given their ranging economic capabilities, which differed according to their respective jobs which were influenced by varying educational qualifications. The young women found themselves in circumstances that saw some of them seeking help from their partners when their income was unable to meet their monthly demands. This study found that heterogeneous employment experiences informed the diverse realities of employed women in the area of study. The employment experiences were recognised as a privilege given the predominance of unemployment among youth in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha.

The prevalence of unemployment, most of which was underlined by incomplete high school education, was reflected in the economic realities of participants. This vulnerable economic position saw women depend on the heads of their households to meet their basic survival needs. The experiences of dependency were intensified by an economic dependency on sexual partners through transactional sexual relationships. This economic strategy was prevalent among women who aspired to slay, thereby conforming to a lifestyle trend that prioritised a fashionable dress code and expensive accessories. This standard of living the women could afford through dependence on intimate sexual partners, thereby indicating a prevalence of transactional sexual relationships. In these transactional sexual encounters, amarhuzu and tender boys among others were sought after kinds of men who were commonly known to spend money readily on women in intimate relationships and granted the women resources through which they could fulfil their status-driven slaying aspirations. This status desire differed from the predominant desire for fun that other women had where fun was associated with alcohol consumption and clubbing. Slaying aspirations was a social trend that saw unemployed women enter into intimate relationships with older men for money. They preferred older men because they believed these men were able to spend money easily since they were at an age where they had put their children through school, paid-up their houses and therefore had less financial responsibilities. A blesser-blessee lifestyle trend was one through which the women fluctuated in between coexisting experiences of dependency.

While dependency was common among the unemployed, other women were hustling. It was in this context of hustling that criminal involvement was made apparent as both an economic and social activity. Illegal engagements such as theft occurred as some women stole items from work. These were items that they would sell privately to make extra money, while other women engaged in robbery through which they made money to meet their financial demands. It was in this setting that drug use was also unearthed as a common criminal activity among

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women. Scholars such as Hoffmeester (2018: 25) and Vetten (2000: 1) suggest that women are practically left out of South Africa's research on gangs and tsotsis thereby implying that only men partake in these violent activities. This gendered conceptualisation of crime continues to perpetuate views of women as the support system to male gangs rather than as equally involved in criminal activities in their own right, thereby recognising their agency in a dangerous space that is male-dominated.

It was therefore within these multiple coexisting economic mechanisms that some women aspired to leave Ngangelizwe Township. This aspiration was common among the women who do not work thus indicating that while these women devised various mechanisms to meet their immediate and varying lifestyle demands, they also envisaged future goals through which they could attain economic independence. The strategy to leave Ngangelizwe Township was apparent among the unemployed whose plans were motivated by seeing other women who had left Ngangelizwe living better lives than they lived when they were in Ngangelizwe. Their better-lived experiences, together with access to jobs that they did not have when they stayed in Ngangelizwe, motivated the unemployed women. It led them to believe that they too may be able to get jobs in cities such as Cape Town, Johannesburg and East London where many of the women that they knew from the township had subsequently migrated.

Other women aspired to stay in Ngangelizwe and focus on their careers. This strategy was motivated by being employed full-time as well as recognising that although their education and training was important in accessing employment, they were also privileged to be employed. This recognition of privilege was informed by their observation of the many women they knew who despite being educated, had not found work. This situation indicated that women's economic realities are produced heterogeneously despite them sharing similar socio-economic features such as education.

Other women opted to stay in Ngangelizwe Township for a while but made it clear that they would like to leave someday. This strategy was mostly shared by the women who were employed in low-paying jobs. Their motivation to leave was shaped by desires to escape the township pressures. This would be achieved by moving to new cities where they could get better jobs and further their studies while keeping their children away from the negative pressures that characterised Ngangelizwe Township. The pressures such as school dropout, crime and alcohol they feared could have a negative impact on the lives of their children thus indicating that the women were aware of the socio-economic role played by their

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environment in enabling or constraining their lifestyle goals. In concurrence, scholars such as Hart (2002), Mazibuko and Umejesi (2015), Oduro et al. (2012), Swartz et al. (2016) and Swartz et al. (2012) maintain that lived experiences are embedded within the social environments that form the background to the socio-economic realities within which lifestyles are negotiated. This, therefore, suggested that women's instrumentalities should be observed in how they are shaped by the social spaces in which they are produced and operated.

The above key findings indicated that participants drew their agencies from a continuum of dependency versus self-empowerment mechanisms (Ranganathan et al., 2017 and Stoebenau et al., 2016). Dependency-oriented mechanisms tended to increase among participants who were either unemployed or pursuing their studies further. This was indicative of increased vulnerability among non-economically active people. These susceptibilities were intensified by the various lifestyle desires of women as indicated by the varying experiences of slay queens and/or blessees compared to those women who did not conform to these common lifestyle trends. For example, it was within slay queen and blessee aspirations where risk-taking was prevalent. This risk-taking that was reflected by common engagements in transactional sexual relationships through which women met their diverse economic desires. Women's economic informed vulnerability was reduced among those who drew from self-empowerment strategies such as employment thus suggesting towards more independence among the employed.

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The theoretical conclusions in the next discussion were arrived at given the findings mentioned above. Theoretical inferences were employed to make sense of the lived experiences of the young women.

7.6 Theoretical implications of key findings

It is with the above-mentioned empirical outcomes in mind that the following key theoretical findings were drawn. These theoretical interpretations addressed the third objective of the study, which was to provide a theoretical interpretation of the lived realities of the women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha. This study proposed that the lived experiences of women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha should be explained through the notion of an intersectional township habitus. A habitus that is reflected by outlooks through which gendered social aspirations were adopted. These were aspirations of financial independence through which the women shared common social meanings of affluence. This mutual

understanding was reflected by how women shared similar identifications of better life that they defined as access to materials such as fashionable wear indicating internalised gendered social measures of better life. This finding reflected views shared by Holt (2008: 233) who maintains that outlooks are classifying principles for engaging in social practice. Consequently, this indicates the significance of shared points of view in outlining common-sense understandings of social action, thus demonstrating the spatial influences that underpin the common-sense understandings. This perspective recognises commonly held lifestyle goals as shaped by the socio-economic environment in which they are envisioned.

The background to the context in which the women's habitus is internalised is recognised as intersectional in how it represents persistent constructions of unequal gendered access to resources. The gendered inequalities were reflected by the women's experiences that are shaped by the coexistence of motherhood roles, through which the unpaid childcare roles consume the women's time. These feminine roles saw many of the women's education compromised through early school dropout, thus confining the women into disadvantaged circumstances that pushed them towards either unemployment or low-paying jobs. The performance of gendered roles subsequently saw the women who (through various economic and social interventions from household members) continued with their schooling despite unplanned motherhood balancing their time between the demands of motherhood and studies thus indicating the far-reaching impact of gender structuring. Gendered role performance is a structuring through which the women who are employed are forced to use their money for their children's needs, most of whom did so without receiving financial help from the children's fathers. This indicated the economic constraints that characterised the women's lives being embedded within deeply ingrained gendered economic imbalances.

Economic inequalities shaped lived experiences in ways that produced gendered class experiences through which the women are often situated in disadvantaged economic conditions while men tend to occupy a better social class. An intersection of class, gender and age underlie the conception of older men as an economic means through which sought after material possessions can be accessed. Consequently, reflecting towards the in-depth impacts of the intersectional structuring through which the township habitus is structured, thus indicating a view maintained by theorists such as Collins (1990) and Crenshaw (1989). These theorists recognised the lived experiences of economic inequalities among women as rooted within fields of cultural production through which mutually existing constraining norms of class, race and gender among others are transferred into social spaces through social institution such as households and schools. Thus, maintaining a view that intersectionality

structures an intersectional township habitus, where the habitus subsequently structures social reality in ways that tend to reproduce the inequalities through economic actions that are underlined by the conditions of its production.

The intersectional township habitus is in fact found to be useful in outlining the women's social action not only as a produced way of making sense of socio-economic experiences but also as a produced way of negotiating economic actions through agencies. This reflected perspectives that were shared by scholars such as Bebbington (1999), Bourdieu (1989) and Pinxten and Lievens (2014) who recognised social action as produced through constant negotiations with structuring constraints thus suggesting agency as informed by constant conflicts with oppressions caused by mutually interacting structuring structures. Therefore, underlying the study's recognition of agency as a product of investment in mechanisms and strategies that are both individual and collective, which are consciously aimed at enabling the women access to material resources that promise them a better life. A view that recognises women's agencies as embedded within the socio-economic contexts in which they are produced. Thus, presenting an understanding of agency as a response to contextually informed economic conditions and as a contextual response that is constrained by the background factors that motivated its production.

Through conceptualising agency as an instrumental social action negotiated within coexisting experiences of advantage and disadvantage, this study identified women's agency as neither free from economic constraints nor completely limited by the constraints within which it is negotiated. This is a view through which this study contributes to the building of original findings in the area of the sociology of gender, particularly insofar as it unpacked how women's realities are produced by the juncture of structural vulnerability, risk-taking and agency. It showed how these variables inform and influence one another, thereby producing complex economic exercises such as engagement in alternative lifestyle choices like transactional sexual relationships as well as crime for material resources. When it comes to risk-taking women fluctuate within experiences of risk (as denoted by the dangers they face such as rape, exposure to unwanted pregnancies, compromised power to negotiate safe sexual practices and infidelity) and experiences of power in how the women are sometimes able to get their desired material outcomes while escaping the exchange of sex (Masvawure, 2010 and Selokow and Mbulaheni, 2013).

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The above findings suggested that gender researchers, political economists and scholars who wish to understand how women engage with their realities in sites experiencing economic hardships must seek to construct an *intersectional township habitus*. They must understand the mindset that is socialised by economic, cultural and social customs and norms that are predominant in the social world in which it is instilled. This mindset should be understood in how it is both structured and in how it subsequently structures women's economic realities through subjective intersectional experiences of race according to which South African social spaces are historically constructed. Hence, the prevalence of poverty among previously disadvantaged racial women, many of whom are located in townships and rural areas. These are social spaces where the racial classifications reflect the persisting effects of their historic racial constructions.

Class intersects with race in ways that continue to produce racialised economic inequalities through which black women within peri-urban and rural areas continue to experience economic exclusions. Gender consequently interacts with class and race in ways that confine women at the bottom of the economic ladder by continuously overburdening women with unpaid feminine roles that require them to divide time between feminine roles and the demands of education and work. The performances of gender often constrain women's economic development, thus creating gendered economic gaps that tend to place men in better economic statuses. Age subsequently intersects with class, race and gender through material pressures presented to young women through the media, thus shaping their aspirations of affluence in disadvantaged social spaces wherein the women may lack the means to meet these commonly held lifestyle goals. Thus, encouraging the women towards alternative means through which transactional relationships and criminal activity serve as the primary means to the goals while also serving to reproduce the township space as a social space characterised by alternative livelihoods. The intersectional township habitus is illustrated in Figure 14.

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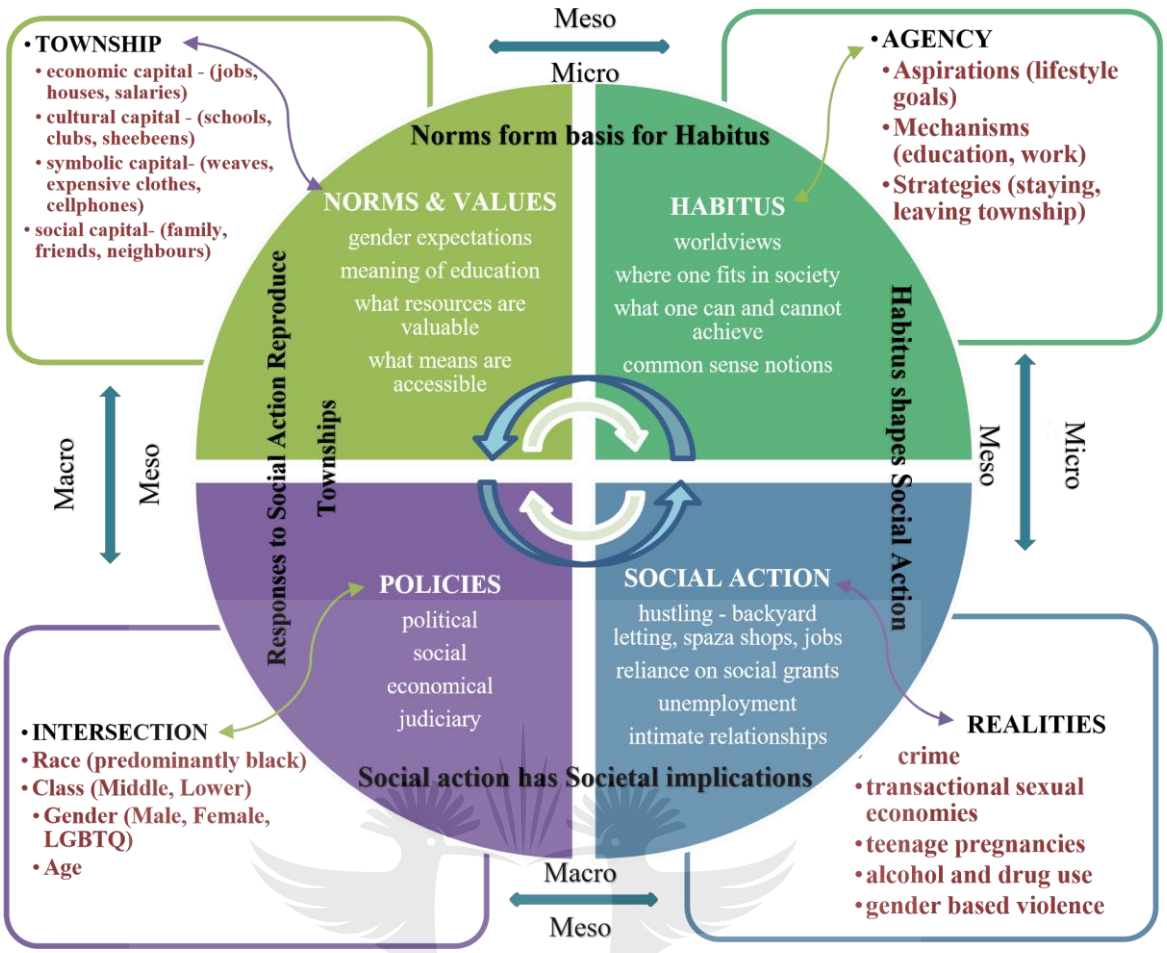

***Figure 14*: The intersectional township habitus. (Source: Author's own)**

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7.7 Recommendations

In addition to meeting objectives, answering key research questions and making original empirical and theoretical contributions, the study aimed at making recommendations for future research. It is in fulfilment of this goal that the following discussion is provided.

7.7.1 Recommendations for future research

The main recommendation proposed based on the above discussion is the need for more research that engages the notion of the intersectional township habitus. It is necessary to examine how the structural vulnerabilities underpinning various township spaces inform the various forms of habitus through which the ranges of agencies manifest. This examination must consider economic disparities common across South African townships where alternative forms of economic activities are accepted as a norm indicated by the prevalence of risk-taking that informs agencies in these social spaces. This research would subsequently

explore the specific kinds of agencies that manifest in different township spaces as shaped by the nuances that differentiate the seemingly familiar township spaces. These nuances, when uncovered, will provide a better understanding of South African township spaces and the lived realities forged in them.

Secondly, there is a need for more research into the economic strategies of women who access money through criminal activities. The research should forefront the voices of the women, thus allowing them to relate the context that underpins their criminal economic engagements. There should be more research conducted on how women in township spaces live their day-to-day lives, managing their vulnerabilities and asserting their agencies in pursuing work (legal and illicit). This research is important in how it will unearth how women enter into predominantly masculine, highly dangerous spaces, thereby challenging the status quo. This undertaking will provide an understanding of how women draw from their womanhood to cope in these unsafe spaces. New research would offer feminine perspectives that can be compared to those of masculine encounters, thereby bringing more understanding into alternative economic engagements that are proven to be commonly engaged in within township spaces.

More research needs to be done in the area of transactional sexual relationships because, although the notion of transactional sex is not new, transactional sexual relationships continuously evolve. In addition, these financially-based relationships are highly complex. Hence the need for investigations that will unearth the nuances in these relationships. These are underpinned through notions of the slay queen and blesser that are justified through expressions such as 'securing the bag', 'it's better to cry in a mansion than laugh in a shack' and 'love does not pay bills'. These concepts are important in informing the various settings in which the sexual and economic exchanges occur. There is a need for more enquiry into how the various economic factors that characterise the livelihoods of women in these relationships interplay in ways that locate the women within ranging situations within the continuum of self-empowerment versus dependency. This will unearth how experiences within the continuum are influenced by the structural vulnerabilities that characterise the social spaces the women occupy. This is, therefore, a call for more research that is cognizant of the ranging influences of the social space and the structuring of the social space where the transactional sexual relationships occur. In addition to this is a need for masculine voices to complement the dominant female views that are acquired through women's perspectives as reflected in the current research on transactional sexual relationships. Masculine experiences

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will provide additional knowledge on transactional sexual relationships in which men partake through a predominant economic role as financial benefactors.

7.7.2 Recommendations for policy interventions

A policy recommendation that flows from the above discussion is the need for a developmental programme that targets the women who have dropped out of school before completing matric. A programme is needed that will offer various skills training that will equip women with practical skills such as computer skills, language proficiency, writing skills and first aid training, among others. These capabilities will render them more employable and in so doing, increase their chances of economic independence. This training is important given the prevalence of high school dropout through which many women are locked into unemployment and economic dependency in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha.

Developmental training needs to be implemented alongside information centres that are aimed at educating the youth on issues around sex, alcohol and drugs, given that many women engage in sexual intercourse in their first intimate relationships. Many young women fall pregnant in this first relationship as they lack adequate sex education. Their lack of knowledge is exacerbated by the silence in their households on sex. This leaves them dependent on their friends who lack information. Early exposure to sex, coupled with early experimentation with alcohol continues to pose a threat as these factors interplay in ways that expose women to risk. Sex, alcohol and drugs are predominantly associated with fun despite the vulnerabilities attached to them. It is in this context that this study proposes an information centre where township youth can access information about the dangers of these socio-economic factors. Information centres could also provide recreational activities that can grant the youth opportunities to engage in positive social activities. These initiatives are important since the area of study has a predominantly young population.

There is also a need for policies that are aimed at forging networks between institutions of higher learning and employers to provide training opportunities for tertiary education students.

Such networks could be formed between government, the private sector and non-governmental organisations, for instance. The work training, exposure to the workplace and skill acquisition provided during these employment periods would go towards increasing students' future employment prospects. Training opportunities would provide students with an income and would also reduce the types of economic dependency discussed in the thesis.

This initiative is important given the financial and social pressures that leave young women who study further susceptible to risky lifestyles through which they obtain money to meet their lifestyle demands. This economic dependency is reduced among employed young women, thus the need for policy to enable young women to increase their chances of securing work.

7.8 Conclusion

This research is valuable in how it provided a practical way of thinking about intersectionality, thus uncovering women as active agents whose realities are complexly shaped by multiple challenges that inform their environment. The study uncovered the young women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha as driven by aspirations of affluence while also battling with the constraining effects of their socio-economic space. Therefore, while sharing dreams of affluence similar to young women from other social spaces, they adopted agencies through hustling in ways that were shaped by the constraints posed by their unique township environment. Although this is not the first South African study on township intersectionality, it provides original empirical contributions in that it focused on young women's aspirations.

In addition, this study makes original theoretical contributions through the notion of intersectional township habitus which unpacks the embeddedness of young women's realities to the structural conditions that characterise the settings occupied by those who make the decisions. Through the intersectional township habitus, this study showed that economic decisions that underpin lifestyle choices of young women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha cannot be understood as mere individual people's choices. They should, however, be recognised as products of an interplay between structural factors that inform the social spaces, economic realities that serve as the background of social agents as well as aspirations that are envisioned by social agents.

The above perspective is important in how it reflects how structural factors provide both opportunities and limitations within which social agents negotiate in constructing their lived experiences. The intersectional township habitus also provides an understanding of the realities of the young women as playing a role in the reproduction of the women's township space. This suggests that the women's lifestyle choices have far-reaching consequences and should be recognised in how they serve to inform cultural norms in their social spaces. As such, this study revealed that women in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha are not only shaped by their environment, but they also shape their environment through their agencies.

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APPENDIX A: CONSENT FORM

My name is Sinethemba Sidloyi (Student number: 215029791). I am a student at the University of Johannesburg. I am conducting research in fulfilment of my Doctoral degree in the Department of Sociology. The title of my thesis is *Livelihoods and lifestyle choices of young women at Ngangelizwe, Mthatha*. This research examines how the realities of young women in the township space are shaped by the social construction of the township environment. This study also investigates how these realities of young women subsequently shape the reproduction of the township space.

I would like to invite you to participate in the study. Becoming a research participant means that you will be asked research questions that are related to the above-mentioned purpose of study. These research questions are asked in a form of an interview process that is held in a place that is convenient to the research participant. The interviews take approximately 60 minutes, are tape-recorded and the researcher may be taking down some notes during the interview. Only I as the researcher and my supervisor, Professor Kammila Naidoo of the Department of Sociology will have access to the transcripts. The transcripts will be stored on an encrypted storage device for 5 years for legal ethical purposes

Your participation in the study is voluntary. This means that you may choose whether you want to be involved in this study. Should you choose to be involved in the study as a research participant, your anonymity is guaranteed. This means that your name and identity will not be revealed in the thesis or transcripts. Pseudonyms will be used in the research report. As a research participant, you are free to leave the study at any time and you do not have to provide reasons for withdrawing from the study.

The results of this study will be used to complete a Doctoral degree. Furthermore, the results of this study will be disseminated in relevant meetings and conferences such as the annual South African Sociological Association (SASA). The research results will also be used to produce articles that will be published in relevant academic journal platforms.

If you have any questions about any aspect of this research (now or in the course of this study or later) please do not hesitate to contact me at the following number, XXX. I will be glad to answer all your questions.

Thank you

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Sinethemba S. Sidloyi

Formal acknowledgement of consent

I,…… on this day of ……. 2017, agree to participate in the interview for the doctoral research project on livelihoods and lifestyle choices of young women at Ngangelizwe, Mthatha. I understand that I will be asked questions regarding my experiences as a young women in Ngangelizwe, Mthatha.

Signed _____ Date _____

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APPENDIX B: ISIVUMELWANO

Igama lam ngu Sinethemba Sidloyi (Student number: 215029791). Ndingumfundi kwi Dyunivesi yase Johannesburg. Ndenza uphando nzulu olunjongo ikukufezekisa izifundo zam endizenza phantsi kwesebe lwezoluntu nezasekuhlaleni kwiDyunivesi yase Johannesburg. Isihloko endiphanda phantsi kwaso simalunga nempilo yomthinjana wase Ngangelizwe eMththa. Injongo yoluphando kukwenza ingxelo ngezimo ophila phantsi kwazo umthinjana waseNgangelizwe nokwazi ukuba ezizimo zinagalelo lini kwezokuhlala jikelele kulendawo.

Ndingathanda ukumema ukuba uthathe inxaxheba kwisifundo. Ukuthabatha inxaxheba kuthetha ukuba uya kubuzwa imibuzo yocwaningo ehambelana nenjongo yokukhankanywa apha ngasentla. Le mibuzo yokuphanda ibuzwa ngohlobo lwenkqubo yodliwano-ndlebe eqhutyelwa kwindawo ekhethwe nguwe. Udliwano-ndlebe luthatha malunga nemizuzu engama-60, i-tape-irekhodiweyo kwaye umphandi angathabatha amanqaku athile ngexesha lodliwano-ndlebe

Ukuthatha inxaxheba kwakho kwisifundo kukuzithandela kwakho. Oku kuthetha ukuba unokukhetha ukuba ufuna ukubandakanyeka na kwesi sifundo. Ukuba ukhetha ukubandakanyeka kwisifundo njengomdlali-nxaxheba, ukungaziwa kwakho kuqinisekisiwe. Oku kuthetha ukuba igama lakho kunye nolwazi lwakho aluyi kubonakaliswa yaye akuyi kubhalwa phantsi nakwiziphumo zophando. Inkcazo yakho ayiyi kusetyenziswa kwingxelo yophando. Njengomthathi nxaxheba-kuphando, ukhululekile ukushiya isifundo nanini na kwaye akudingeki ukuba unikezele izizathu zokurhoxisa kwisifundo.

Iziphumo zolu phononongo ziya kusetyenziswa ukugqiba izifundo nzulu. Iziphumo zoluphando ziya kuhanjiswa nakwiintlanganiso ezifanelekileyo kunye neenkomfa ezifana ne-South African Sociological Association (SASA). Iziphumo zophando ziya kuphinda zisetyenziselwa ukuvelisa amanqaku aza kushicilelwa nakumaphepha aphononononga izihloko ezifana nesihloko soluphando.

Ukuba unemibuzo malunga nayiphi na into yolu cwaningo (ngoku okanye ekuqhutyweni kwesi sifundo okanye kamva) nceda ungathandabuzi ukunxibelelana nam enombolo elandelayo, 083 697 6336. Ndiya kuvuyela ukuphendula yonke imibuzo yakho.

Enkosi

Sinethemba Sidloyi

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Isivumelwano sokuthabatha inxaxheba kwingxelo

Mna,…… ngalomhla ka…….kunyaka 2017, ndiyavuma ukuthabatha inxaxheba ngokuphendula imibuzo emalunga nesimo sempilo yomthinjan waseNgangelizwe eMthatha. Ndiyqonda ukuba ndizawubuzwa imibuzo ngezimvo zam njengomthinjana waseNgangelizwe eMthatha. Ndiyaqonda kananjalo ukuba impendulo zalengxelo zimayela nezifundo zothweso sidanga kwezonzululwazi.

Tyikitya _____ Umhla _____

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APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1) **Background information: Please tell me about yourself:**
    - Who are you?
    - Where did you come from before you stayed in Ngangelizwe?
    - Did you move here alone or with your family?
    - Why did you move here?
    - Do you have any siblings?
    - Please kindly describe your family.
    - What do your parents do?
    - What do your siblings do?
    - How would you describe your childhood?
    - How would you describe the socio-economic realities that shaped your childhood?
    - Please tell me about your education background.
    - Where did you begin your education? Please describe for me the kind of environment where your school was located.
    - How would you describe your early years at school?
    - Do you still remember what you wanted to be when you were young?
    - What shaped these aspirations?
    - Where did you attend secondary school? Please describe for me the kind of environment where your school was located.
    - Please describe your secondary school experience.
    - Did you still have the same aspirations in secondary school as you had in your primary school?
    - How did these aspirations change?
    - What do you think changed these aspirations?
    - Please tell me about your high school experiences.
    - Where did you attend your high school? Please describe for me the kind of environment where your school was located.
    - Did your siblings go to the same schools that you went to?
    - Please share with me your understanding of their schooling experience.
    - Please tell me about your parent's education. What is their highest education level?

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- Please share with me your parent's education experiences that you may know of.
- What did your parents aspire to become?
- What did they become?
- What factors shaped what they became?
- Do you know what aspirations your parents had for you? Please share.
- What do you think shaped these aspirations?
- How do they feel about your education choices thus far?
- Please tell me about your family's socio-economic position. How would you describe your socio-economic status.
- What factors would you say are responsible for this socio-economic status? Please explain.
- How has your socio-economic status shaped your learning experience? Please explain.

2) Please tell me about your social experience

- Do you have any friends? Please tell me about your friendships
- How old are your friends?
- What do your friends do?
- How long have you been friends with them?
- What does your friendship mean to you? Please explain
- What do you do when spending time with your friends? Please explain
- What is their highest education qualification?
- Do you and your friends have any children? If yes, how many children?
- How old were you when you had children?
- Please share the experiences that shaped the pregnancies
- Are you still in a relationship with the baby's father? Please explain
- How has having a child shaped your experience?
- How has it shaped your friendship experience?
- How did has having children affected your relationships with your families? Please explain
- How has pregnancy affected your studies?
- Are you currently in a relationship? Please explain
- Are your friends currently in relationships? Please explain
- Are you and your friends slay queens? Please explain

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- Do you know any slay queens in the area?
- How do you feel about them?
- Please describe where you and your friends fall within the slay queen description
- Am I slay queen? Why?
- So, where do you usually go shopping and hang out and chat and have fun?
- How often do you meet up and do girl's stuff?
- What stuff do you usually do when you meet and hang out?
- I know girls love dressing up, please take me through your preparations: your dress code and all that
- Where do you get financial resources?
- Roughly how much do you need for your fun time with your friends?
- Please take me through your evening out. Let's say Friday if not phuza Thursday. Let's make it phuza Thursday
- What are some of the evenings that stand out when you think of your social time with your friends? Please explain

3) Please tell me about your life in Ngangelizwe

- How long have you lived in the area?
- How would you describe life in Ngangelizwe?
- What key factors shape your experiences? Please explain.
- What are the main challenges that you experience? Please explain.
- How has living here shaped your life? Please explain.
- Please take me through your weekends in Ngangelizwe. What do young people like you do for fun?
- How different are weekends from weekdays? Please explain.
- How would you describe Ngangelizwe to someone who has not been here but would like to come live here?
- What advice would you give that person?
- How re your experiences of this place shaped by you being a young woman?
- Do you think being a man or a woman matters here? Please explain.
- Are there any slay queens in the area?
- What does being a slay queen mean to people in Ngangelizwe?
- How are slay queens perceived here?

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- How are they treated? Please explain.
- Blessers are a trend among the youth, any idea why?
- Do you know of any blessers?
- Are there any men from here who are blessers?
- Are there women who have blessers?
- What does being a blesser mean in the area?
- How is the general attitude towards blessers?
- Do you have one?
- Would you like one? Please explain.
- What challenges are commonly faced by young women in Ngangelizwe? Please explain.
- What strategies do they use to overcome them? Please explain.
- What distinguishes young women from here from those from other parts of Mthatha? Please explain.

4) Please tell me about your lifestyle

- Are you on Instagram or Facebook?
- Which influential people do you follow?
- What makes you follow them
- How would you describe your style?
- What influences your style?
- What fashion trends do you follow as a young woman?
- What challenges do you face in accessing your lifestyle related materials?
- What strategies do you employ in dealing with the challenges?

Thank you.

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APPENDIX D: QUESTIONS FOR FOCUS GROUPS

Womanhood in Ngangelizwe Township

- What are the main experiences that characterise the lives of young women in Ngangelizwe?
    a. What are the predominant factors?
    b. How different are they from those shaping young men's experiences?
    c. Where do notions of blesser and slay queen fit within these experiences?
    d. How prevalent are these notions?
    e. Please describe the common features that characterise the lifestyles of young women in this social space
    f. How do finances inform these lifestyles?
    g. What are the main sources of finance among young women in Ngangelizwe?
    h. What would you say are the main challenges that characterise the lives of young women in Ngangelizwe?
    i. What strategies do they usually employ in dealing with those challenges?
    j. Where would you say they draw their strength from?

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APPENDIX E: PERMISSION INTO THE FIELD

Ms Karin du Plooy
karindp@uj.ac.za

UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG

From: Prof A.D. van Breda and Prof T. Guse

To: S Sidloyi (215029791)

Cc:Prof K Naidoo, Dr B Dworzanowski-Venter and Prof Cecilia Van Zyl-Schalekamp

Date: 02 February 2016

Student Name	S Sidloyi
Student Number	215029791
Title of Study	Livelihoods, Lifestyle Choices and the Construction of Young Women's Realities in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha
Department	Sociology
Degree	D Lit et Phil
Supervisor(s)	Prof K Naidoo and Dr B Dworzanowski-Venter
Ethics Approval #	01–030–2015
Approval Date	02 February 2016

Re: Research Ethics Committee and Higher Degrees Committee Proposal Approval
The Faculty of Humanities Research Ethics Committee has scrutinised your research proposal and confirms that it complies with the approved ethical standards of the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Johannesburg.

In addition, the Faculty of Humanities Higher Degrees Committee (Humanities) approves your proposal if it is a Masters dissertation and recommends your proposal to the Senate Higher Degrees Committee if it is a Doctoral thesis.

Warm regards

(PROF A.D. VAN BREDA)

CHAIR: FACULTY OF HUMANITIES HIGHER DEGREES COMMITTEE (HUMANITIES)

(PROF T. GUSE)

CHAIR: FACULTY OF HUMANITIES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

University of Johannesburg | Auckland Park Kingsway Campus | Cnr Kingsway and University Road, Auckland Park
Department of Social Work, PO Box 524, Auckland Park, 2006, Johannesburg, Republic of South Africa | www.uj.ac.za/socialwork
Prof Adrian D. Van Breda | Tel +27 11 559 2804 | Fax +27 11 559 2800 | avanbreda@uj.ac.za

APPENDIX F: PROOF OF REGISTRATION

University of Johannesburg

PO BOX 524,AUCKLAND PARK,2006
Tel:+27 (0)11 559-4555
Fax:+27 (0)11 559 4513

Proof of Registration

Student Name	SINETHEMBA SIYAKHOLWA SIDLOYI	Date Generated	13-Mar-2020
ID Number	[redacted]	Student Number	215029791
Telephone Number	0836975336		
Postal Address	P125 MTB HOWARD COLLEGE CAMPUS,GLENWOOD ,DURBAN,KZN,4001		
Email Address	sinothembasidloyi@gmail.com		

Qualification: DLS033 - D LITT ET PHIL (SOCIOLOGY) (RD)
Study Period: SECOND YEAR
Offered On: APK CAMPUS FULL-TIME
Registration Period: 01-Jan-2020 to 31-Dec-2020

Subject	Description	Cancel Date	Exempt Y/N	Year Exam	Exam Month	Amount
	Block:1 - SEMESTER ONE					
SOS0119	THESIS: SOCIOLOGY		N	2020	6	3350.00
	Block:2 - SEMESTER TWO					
SOS0129	THESIS: SOCIOLOGY		N	2020	11	3350.00

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the registration is correct for the current academic year

This serves as proof of registration for the following purpose: Bursaries, Loans, Medical Aid Schemes and Income Tax

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APPENDIX G: TURNITIN REPORT

Livelihoods, Lifestyle Choices and the Construction of Young Women's Realities in Ngangelizwe Township, Mthatha

ORIGINALITY REPORT

3%	3%	2%	1%
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	open.uct.ac.za Internet Source	<1%
2	www.ecdc.co.za Internet Source	<1%
3	www.hrw.org Internet Source	<1%
4	Sinethemba Sidloyi. "Elderly, Poor and Resilient: Survival Strategies of Elderly Women in Female-Headed Households: An Intersectionality Perspective", Journal of Comparative Family Studies, 2016 Publication	<1%
5	hdl.handle.net Internet Source	<1%
6	www.tandfonline.com Internet Source	<1%
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